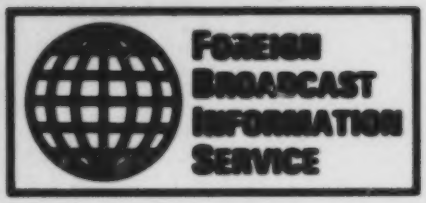


# Daily Report

# Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-079
Tuesday
23 April 1996

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# Daily Report
## Near East & South Asia

*FBIS-NES-96-079* *23 April 1996*

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## Inter-Arab Affairs

### Inter-Arab: Prospect of Holding Summit To Discuss Lebanon Raised

*NC2104134196 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has sent a written message to Tunisian President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali. It deals with the possibility of holding an Arab summit, even a mini-summit, to discuss the Arab situation in general and conditions in Lebanon in particular.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid delivered this message at noon today to Yusuf el-Mokaddam, Tunisian ambassador to Egypt and permanent representative at the Arab League. Tunisia is the current chairman of the Arab League Council.

### Inter-Arab: Arab League Denounces Turkish 'Attack' on Syria

*NC2204154996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)—The Arab League expressed its surprise and regret at the remarks Turkish Prime minister Mesut Yilmaz and his foreign minister made, which involved an attack on an Arab state and a member of the Arab League; namely Syria.

In a statement today, the Arab League secretariat reiterated its eagerness to maintain the solid historic relations linking Arab states to Turkey, pointing out that the Turkish officials remarks do not agree with the line the Arab states are careful to pursue in their relations with Turkey or with neighborly relations, which are at the core of Arab states' policy toward Turkey.

The secretariat expressed its great surprise that these statements should be made at a time when Turkey is requesting the Arab League play a role in bringing views closer between Turkey on one hand and Syria and Iraq on the other.

## Palestinian Affairs

### Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Asks Jordan To Mediate Between PNA and Israel

*MM2204135396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Apr 96 p 5*

[Report by Muhammad al-Da'mah in Amman: "Abu-'Ala': We Have Asked Jordan To Mediate Between the Authority and Israel"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ahmad Quray' (Abu-'Ala'), speaker of the Legislative Council and president of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] [as published], has said that, because of its special relations with Palestine and its relations with Israel founded on trust, Jordan can play a positive role in resolving some of the pending issues between the PNA and Israel. He refused, however, to comment on Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's statements that Jordan is sheltering Hamas leaders. In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday before leaving Amman where he met with Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, he said that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat had sent him to ask the Jordanian Government to mediate between the PNA and Israel. He also discussed several issues with Jordanian officials, including convening the Palestine National Council [PNC]. He said: "We discussed all the problems hampering Jordanian-Palestinian relations, especially in view of the fact that my relations with Prime Minister al-Kabariti are personal and special."

On the outcome of 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, Abu-'Ala' said: "All issues were discussed, including those that are more important than the blockade and the closure, bearing in mind that it is detrimental to us, our people, and our economy. What is more important, however, is respect for and commitment to the Palestinian-Israeli agreement." He added that Israel has hampered some very important and vital issues in this agreement, such as the redeployment in Hebron, which, thus far, has not taken place.

He said that the issue of a secure passage between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was discussed, and it was agreed to set up a committee which would immediately start looking into implementing the secure passage. Abu-'Ala' believes that "if this passage was open, the closure and blockade, despite being detrimental, would have less of an impact and would not have the same effect as now." He added that the movement of goods and people between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank would be channeled through this passage. He added that "the third and very important issue which is a key element in this agreement is the issue of area 'B.' Under the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, this area which includes the villages should become area 'A,' and any security links with Israel should end. This is what we have agreed, but unfortunately Israel has not implemented it. This was also discussed and it was agreed that the relevant committees should start dealing with this issue."

In response to a question on President 'Arafat's statements concerning the Hamas leaderships' relations with Jordan and the reasons behind them, he said: "I do not like to talk about these issues and would rather talk about the issues which reinforce and advance

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Palestinian-Jordanian relations. However, in view of the security situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the caches of weapons which were discovered, the PNA is somewhat concerned about the nature of these weapons caches. I do believe that when this issue is discussed with Jordan, we should put it in a practical framework and try to resolve it together."

**Palestinian Affairs: Factions Condemn U.S. Backing of Israeli 'Aggression'**

*TA2204155296 Ramallah AL-BILAD in Arabic 20 Apr 96 p 3*

[FBIS Translated Text] Ramallah, AL-BILAD — The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] held Israel responsible for the massacres being perpetrated by its forces against innocent children and civilians in Lebanon. Moreover, they condemned the overt U.S. backing of Israel's hostile policy toward Lebanon, which coincides with the policy of siege, closure, and settlement activity being pursued against the Palestinian people.

In a statement distributed yesterday in Ramallah and al-Birah, the two fronts announced their complete solidarity with the Lebanese people. The two fronts also called on the Palestinian people and all the world's liberals — democratic and national forces and countries — to support the Lebanese people in confronting the Israeli tool of destruction and terrorism. Furthermore, the statement also condemned what it called Arab silence, which is tantamount to blessing the massacres taking place there.

The statement called on the Arab League to denounce the aggression, halt normalization measures with Israel, and call on the Security !ouncil to immediately stop the aggression against the Palestinian and Lebanese people.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Several Hundred' Demonstrate Against Lebanon Operation**

*TA2204150896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Several hundred Palestinians demonstrated against the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operation in Lebanon in the al-Duhayshah refugee camp near Bethlehem at noon today. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that they burned U.S. and Israeli flags and chanted pro-Hizballah slogans.

The Palestinian police today fired shots in the air to disperse a demonstration of several hundred Palestinians who marched toward the Morag junction in the Qatif Bloc to protest the IDF operation in Lebanon.

**Palestinian Affairs: Israeli, U.S. Policies Said Leading to 'New Explosion'**

*TA2204154896 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 22 Apr 96 p 11*

[Editorial: "Cease-Fire or Halting the Aggression?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Undoubtedly, the failure of the intensive high-level diplomatic efforts exerted over the last two days by several countries, foremost of all France, Russia, and the United States to halt the Israeli aggression against Lebanon stems not only from Israel's insistence to score gains as a condition for stopping its aggression, but also because these efforts — by virtue of the pro-Israeli U.S. position — are concentrated on establishing a so-called "cease-fire" while disregarding Security Council Resolution 425 calling for Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories. This is what Israel refuses to implement and which also constitutes the main cause for the unceasing tension.

Despite the terrible massacre that it perpetrated in the village of Qana, the immense havoc that it has wreaked, and the fact that the number of civilian victims of this aggression now exceeds 1,000 martyrs and wounded, Israel continues blatantly to raise conditions and terms from which it transpires that Israel wants to secure legitimacy for its occupation of south Lebanon and deprive the Lebanese of their natural and legitimate right to resist the occupation.

The odd thing about the ongoing efforts is that while the aggressor must not be rewarded for his aggression and appropriate international sanctions should be adopted against him, the United States — through Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who has publicly supported the aggression — is endeavoring to equate the aggressor with the victim and impose the Israeli logic on any understanding or agreement that will be reached.

Here lies the basis for the failure, especially since Russia, France, Italy, and other countries have explicitly urged an end to Israeli aggression and Israel's adherence to international legitimacy. This is a position that the United States does not support in its current efforts.

One of the strange paradoxes is that the United States and Israel are trying to delude the entire world into believing that what is happening in Lebanon is a border war between two states and that this calls for "a cease-fire" or a truce. They ignore the fact that what is taking place is flagrant Israeli aggression against the Lebanese people, their sovereignty, and dignity and that the Lebanese Resistance has clearly announced that its goal is the liberation of the Lebanese territories occupied by Israel.

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But this U.S.-Israeli delusion, the failure of which has been proved repeatedly in the past, cannot contribute to achieving calm and stability in the region. After all the havoc that Israel has wreaked in Lebanon, what is needed now is not "a cease-fire" but the forcing of Israel to halt its aggression, its immediate withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories according to Resolution 425, and the imposition of sanctions compatible with the massacres that Israel has committed and the immense devastation that it has wrought by its massive military machine.

In conclusion, even if at worst a so-called cease-fire is reached, Israel and the United States must realize that the continued Israeli occupation and the continuation of policies hostile to the Arabs and their interests will definitely lead to a new explosion. This is because the just and comprehensive peace acceptable to the Arabs is one based on international legitimacy, not what America and Israel impose by the force of arms and through immense devastation and horrible massacres.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Addresses PNC Session**

*JN2204182096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1550 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Speech by Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat at the opening session of the Palestine National Council at Rashad al-Shawwa Center in Gaza—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. And we wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land to make them leaders and make them heirs to establish a firm place for them in the land [Koranic verse].

Brother Speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], sister and brother members, guest ambassadors and consuls, and honorable guests: You are welcome on the liberated land of Palestine [applause]; you are welcome on the liberated land of Palestine; you are welcome in heroic Gaza; you are welcome in the cities and villages of Palestine, over which your flag—the flag of beloved Palestine—is fluttering; you are welcome on your holy land—the land of the prophets and messengers, the first of the two Kiblahs, the third holy place, and the point of departure for the midnight journey of Prophet Muhammad, God's praise and peace be upon him, to the seven heavens, and the cradle of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him; you are welcome among your kinfolk and relatives; you are welcome on the land of divine religions; you are welcome on the land of the fathers and forefathers; you are welcome in Palestine, the present, the past, and the future, the future, the future, the future; you are welcome on the land of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], which was established on the liberated land of the homeland; and you are welcome, beloved ones of Palestine and makers of its glory on your good earth. You have spent your lives struggling and you have offered your souls to liberate the homeland. I welcome you in the name of your kinfolk and your land on the land of Palestine—dear Palestine.

Our people, who have removed the hateful yolk of occupation, are looking toward your PNC with hope and confidence. After 31 years, the homeland returned to its people, the PNC returned to its land, and you meet on the liberated land of Gaza after a long, long absence. The people had every unshakable faith and an iron will because they are giant people, because they are giant people. The people offered huge sacrifices, and we walked our agonizing, long, tiring journey. That He might try you, which of you is best in conduct. [Koranic verse]

Brothers and beloved ones, brothers, sisters, and beloved ones, PNC members: God be praised for fulfilling His promise, preparing His soldiers, supporting His followers, and defeating the parties. The homeland is awaiting you, brothers, and your sacrifices. Your homeland expects you to start work and construction after the occupation ruined it and was about to destroy its land and people. We begin to build the homeland from nothing. Yes, we begin to build the homeland from nothing. The occupation has completely destroyed its infrastructure.

Brother members of the esteemed PNC, history will write with letters of light and fire, about your blessed revolution and the PLO, the leader of our people's struggle, this eternal epic which was made with pure blood by the sons of our people in the diaspora camps, as well as the sons of our people who have continued to stand fast in the homeland in order to see this eternal day, during which our new generals, the stone-throwing children, the RPG [rocket propelled grenade] generals raised the Palestinian flag over the dear Palestinian cities, villages, and towns. We will not forget our people's sacrifices. We will not forget the righteous martyrs. We will not forget the prisoners and detainees. We will not forget the wounded and the injured. [applause]

The memory of the Palestinian homeland will not forget the sons of Palestine in the diaspora camps. Yes, the memory of the Palestinian homeland will not forget the sons of Palestine in the diaspora camps. Palestine is the homeland of all Palestinians wherever they maybe. It is a homeland of free people, free people, free people. We will not forget our brothers in the fraternal Arab states who hosted our PNCs and the struggle of our

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people, nursed our pains, and took care of our problems. Greetings to all of them—a greeting of thanks and gratitude to them and to all friends. [applause] Yes, greetings of faithfulness, thanks, and gratitude to all of them and to all friends who supported our just cause.

Sisters, brother members of the PNC, your esteemed council is convened in its 21st session. Ahead of you is an agenda full of great responsibilities which our people and the PLO should assume to pursue the march and to build and entrench the PNA, the solid base of the independent Palestinian state, with holy Jerusalem as its capital, with holy Jerusalem as its capital, with Jerusalem as its capital. [applause] Yes, its capital is holy Jerusalem whether they like it or not, and he who does not like this may go and drink from the sea of Gaza. [applause]

After a few days, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will begin to discuss the final status issues of Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, borders, sovereignty, and relations with the neighboring states. Brothers, your esteemed council should set the bases and make the decisions which reinforce our negotiating stand and remove the pretexts which would be used by the Israeli Government or the anti-peace forces to obstruct these negotiations or to procrastinate on them. To be truthful to you, as I have always been, throughout the years of struggle, our PNCs and the PLO have made many decisions to pave the way for international recognition. Yes, this was in 1968, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1988, 1991, and now. Yes, in light of the world and Israeli recognition of our people and just rights—if international relations are based on mutual interests—then we should give in return for what we take. There is no way to take without giving in return.

Let me speak to you frankly. We respect our word. We respect our commitments. And fulfill every engagement, for every engagement will be required into on the day of reckoning. [Koranic verse] This is a characteristic of all revolutionaries and free people in the world.

In the name of the Palestinian people and the PLO, we signed the memorandum of mutual recognition between the PLO and the Israeli Government. You know that mutual recognition has ended the war which had been raging between us and the Israelis for almost half a century. With the end of war and the end of acts of violence, it is necessary to abrogate or amend those articles in our national charter which conflict with the peace process and with what we have signed. Proceeding on the road of peace, and solving all problems between us and our neighbors through peaceful means necessitates that we should be in harmony with ourselves and with our interests. Therefore, before all of you — and I repeat what we have signed based on our people's higher national interests — I call on your council to amend all the articles in the Palestinian National Charter, which contravene the peace of the brave which we have signed. I call on your council to entrust the Legal Committee to draft and amend the charter to take into consideration the new facts which have been embodied on the ground by the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority and the beginning of a new era of Palestinian-Israeli relations based on coexistence and peace between the two peoples, mutual recognition, and the recognition of our people and rights.

Dear brothers: One inch of the land of Palestine is more dear to me than the entire world. But we delivered him and his nephew Lut and directed them to the land which we have blessed for the nations. [Koranic verse] Yes, an inch of the land of Palestine is more dear to me than the entire world. One foothold on the land of Palestine is more dear to me, and much more important than all words on paper, now that the miracle has been achieved, that the Palestinian entity was established, and that we started the 1,000-mile journey. Yes, the Palestinian national entity and the Palestinian national authority, which our PNC endorsed in 1974. The PNC then endorsed the establishment of a national authority on any part of the Palestinian territory which is liberated, or from which the Israelis withdraw.

Yes, brothers, the miracle was achieved, the Palestinian entity was created, and we started the 1,000-mile journey on the land of Palestine. We established the National Authority and we raised the Palestinian flag. The winds of freedom and paradise started to blow. The winds of freedom and paradise began to blow on our land, people, strugglers, revolutionaries, and your PNC.

Dear brothers: Strengthening the PNA is the immediate task of the PLO and your PNC. Your new-born National Authority is facing the challenges of construction, development, security, and stability amid difficult and harsh conditions. It is also facing merciless enemies, the enemies of peace.

We started the reconstruction from point zero, or even below the point zero, in the field of reconstruction, social and economic development, and the building of the infrastructure which was destroyed by occupation. The world now stands witness to the fact that our National Authority proved competence and proficiency in establishing the solid foundations for our Palestinian entity. Let me remind you of one point only. They handed over the schools to us on — when Abu-Tha'ir? [presumably referring to Yasir 'Amr, official in charge of education] — Thursday night, thus throwing to us the challenge that we could not open them on Saturday. We opened all of them on Saturday. The schools were

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opened by your brother teachers, who worked day and night, and some of them are working three shifts a day. Greetings to them, a thousand greetings to them.

Yes brothers, our National Authority has proven to be highly efficient in laying down the firm bases of our national edifice in a record time. The Palestinian legislative and presidential elections came to draw the most shining pictures of pluralism and democracy of which we are proud. We established our democracy while carrying Palestinian rifles. We are also proud that we are setting up our democracy now on our liberated land.

Yes, brothers, the elections came to lay down a solid basis for our national entity in a record time. The Palestinian legislative and presidential elections came to draw the most shining pictures of pluralism and democracy in the Palestinian oasis of democracy, in the dear land of Palestine. The legislative and presidential elections on the basis of democratic choice and political pluralism have added new momentum to the march of our people. This democratic experience has given our people an appropriate position among world nations.

We must caution here against the dangers threatening our democracy from forces deviating from national consensus. These forces do not believe in the democratic option, democracy, pluralism, or in what the Palestinian people were unanimous. There are many dangers coming from more than one direction and more than one place. I am ready to say more, more, and more about this in our secret sessions.

Sister and brother members of the PNC: Our national unity is our shield, weapon, the source of our strength, the secret of our victory, and our path to achieving our people's objectives of freedom and independence. We must overcome all difficulties obstructing the path of our firm unity. We extend our hand to all the sons of our people to come to common terms to serve this homeland, [?the future] of this homeland, and its loftiness, as well as to achieve the rights of its people, their objectives, aspirations, and future, particularly now that our people have strongly proven its existence on the political and geographical map in the region, as a basic factor, as a basic factor. We have achieved our national unity in more difficult circumstances than these. We are in dire need today of rebuilding our national unity in our homeland on a basis of equality and unity of objectives and methods. The homeland needs the minds and arms of all of us. The great tasks ahead of us call on us to maintain unity, solidarity, and fraternity. The greatness of tasks will only strengthen our firmness, adherence, and rally around the aspirations of our people while building high the edifice of their authority and their homeland.

Sisters, brother members of the PNC, self-reliance is the strong basis of every independence and sovereignty. Economic development, which is carried out by our people, is the only means which will take our people to the decisive and real independence. Yes, it is the only means which will take our people to the decisive and real independence. Although we appreciate those who extend it, the international aid will not build a strong national economic base. This is a fact of which our Palestinian people should be aware. States are established by the arms and sweat of their sons, and by their creativity. We need to build an independent Palestinian economic base that is not dependent on an economy which is mortgaged to others. We want our workers to work on our land and in our factories and institutions, not in the factories of others. This is in light of the unjust occupation policy against our national economy. Palestinian businessmen are called upon to build their homeland and factories on their land. Their companies should contribute to building this homeland. Palestinian brains were creative in building many of the prosperous institutions in our Arab homeland and the world. The economic laws which were enacted by the National Authority provide the best atmosphere for the Palestinian, Arab, and foreign investors to allow them to work freely and avoid interference in their projects and efforts.

The Palestinian economic functionaries are called upon to hold a national meeting to adopt economic development plans. Palestinian businessmen should greatly contribute to this plan. The battle of development and construction is the battle of all Palestinians, not that of the National Authority only. Our people should rely on themselves to build their national economy and to lay the pillars of their political independence on their land. And say: Work righteousness: Soon will God observe your work, and His apostle, and the believers. [Koranic verse]

Sisters, brother members of the PNC, on behalf of all of you, I tell all our righteous martyrs, headed by the prince of martyrs, Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], [applause] the pledge is the pledge and the oath is the oath. In your name, I greet our female prisoners and heroic detainees [applause], headed by Shaykh Ahmad Yasin. I tell them be patient and may God help you, for release from your suffering is soon. In your name and on behalf of our steadfast people I thank the fraternal Arab states which have always supported our Palestinian people to enable them attain their national rights to independence, freedom, repatriation, and self-determination. I thank in particular fraternal Egypt [applause] and its great

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President Muhammad Husni Mubarak [applause] who sponsored the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations out of his concern about our people's rights and about bringing their freedom from occupation closer.

I thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and King Fahd, custodian of the two holy mosques. [applause] I also thank the brothers in the Gulf Cooperation Council states for their generous support for our people in the stages of their struggle. I truly salute sisterly Tunisia and my brother President Zine El Abidine [applause] for Tunisia's support for the PLO in the most difficult circumstances and darkest moments. I also thank sisterly Algeria, which embraced your Palestine National Council. [applause] And I thank sisterly Yemen, which embraced your forces [applause] in the most difficult circumstances and darkest moments.

I extend my thanks to sisterly Morocco and its King Hassan, chairman of the Jerusalem Committee, and to Jordan, our twin sister, and its King Husayn [applause], to Lebanon and its President al-Asad, to Syria [laughter], to Lebanon [laughter and applause] and Syria, please excuse me, to Syria and Lebanon. I extend my thanks to Syria and its President al-Asad and to sisterly Lebanon [laughter] with its beloved president. I also extend my thanks to Mauritania, Sudan, steadfast Iraq [applause], Libya and my brother al-Qadhdhafi. [laughter] Blood is thicker than water. [applause] Blood is thicker than water. What can I do for you? He is my friend and brother. What can I do for you?

The Arab Nation is urged to achieve solidarity, unity, and brotherhood. From the rostrum of the esteemed PNC and from liberated Gaza and Palestine, I call on Arab kings and presidents to hold an urgent Arab summit [applause] for the sake of Palestine and Lebanon [applause] and for the sake of maintaining the Arab future and fate.

In the name of the PNC and our militant people, I salute and express my appreciation to friendly countries, especially, the cosponsors of the peace process — the United States and Russia — the European Union, Japan, China, the Islamic countries, the African countries, the nonaligned states. I salute and express my appreciation to all these countries, who recognized the rights of our people, supported us, and extended aid to our people and to our National Authority to rebuild our institutions and our economic and social structure after it was ruined by the long occupation. Finally, this goes out to the people of Lebanon who embraced the Palestinian people [applause] and their pain and battles, including the Beirut battle, which we are both in. Yes, I say to them: Be patient and seek help from God. We support you. We support you. We support you. We support you. [applause] We support you not with words, but with blood. [applause]

In conclusion, I call on all our people's factions and forces to shoulder their national and historic responsibilities to maintain our people's gains and reinforce their National Authority to build the homeland, its institutions and economy, the democratic civil society within the framework of political pluralism. I call on our people to maintain Palestinian legitimacy and the supremacy of the law and to maintain security and safety for all the citizens in order to achieve stability and prosperity for our people and future generations so that we may continue our victorious march toward independence and establish the independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. And to enter your temple as they had entered it before. And to enter your temple as they had entered it before. Never does God depart from his promise. We will, without doubt, help our apostles and those who believe, both in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses will stand forth. [Koranic verses]

Peace and blessings be upon you. [applause]

**Palestinian Affairs: Al-Za'nun Elected PNC Speaker; 536 Members Attend Session**

*JN2304123896 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television 1200 Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestine National Council [PNC] resumed its meetings at the Rashad al-Shawwa Cultural Center in Gaza. Salim al-Za'nun was unanimously elected speaker of the PNC. Bishop Iliya Khuri and Taysir Qub'ah were elected deputy speakers. Muhammad Subayh was reelected as secretary.

The elected speaker hoped the PNC would hold its 22d session in Jerusalem, the capital of the independent Palestinian state. Al-Za'nun announced during the PNC's discussion of the first topic on its agenda today that 536 PNC members are taking part in the meetings, that is, 100 members more than the required quorum. He added that 130 members did not attend, indicating that some of them are now on their way to Gaza.

The PNC will discuss the Israeli measures, particularly the expansion of settlement activity, the siege imposed on the Palestinian people and Jerusalem, the transfer of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem, and two reports by the National Fund and the Executive Committee.

A new PLO Executive Committee will be elected during the current session. A plan to reconstruct the homeland will also be discussed.

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**Palestinian Affairs: Israel Stops 2 Deputies From Traveling to PNC Session**

*JN2204142896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupation forces this morning banned Rafiq Shakir al-Natshah and Dr. 'Ali Abu-al-Rish, two deputies from Hebron Governorate, from going to Gaza Governorate to take part in the Palestine National Council's meetings to be held today. The occupation forces stopped the two deputies at the permanent checkpoint at Bayt Jibril road, which passes through the green line, and asked them to return because their names supposedly were not registered on their lists.

**Palestinian Affairs: Official—PNC To Amend Charter, Adopt New One in 6 Months**

*TA2304045596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A PLO official in Gaza says an arrangement has been agreed upon between Israel and the Palestinians on abolishing the Palestinian Covenant. The official, who insisted on anonymity, said that under the terms of the arrangement, the PNC [Palestine National Council] would rescind the clauses which call for Israel's destruction but would wait six months before adopting a new covenant. PLO officials say Israel threatened to freeze all agreements with the Palestinians if a declaration is endorsed on establishing a Palestinian state.

**Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Spokesman Denies Plot To Assassinate 'Arafat**

*TA2204174996 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ibrahim Ghawshah, the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman in Jordan, has denied the accusations leveled by the Palestinian security services in Gaza about a plot to assassinate Yasir 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian Authority. Ghawshah described these accusations as theatrics aimed at diverting attention from the National Council's meeting to amend the Palestinian National Charter.

**Palestinian Affairs: Abu Abbas 'Apologizes' for Achille Lauro Hijacking**

*MS2304094996 London DAILY EXPRESS in English 23 Apr 96 p 16*

[Report on interview with Abu Abbas, Achille Lauro hijacker, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "I'm Sorry, Admits Terror Chief Who Murdered Tourist"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] One of the world's most wanted terrorists came out of hiding yesterday with an astonishing apology to the family of a man he murdered — and a call for Middle East peace.

Eleven years ago Abu Abbas masterminded the hijacking of the Italian cruise liner Achille Lauro, but disappeared shortly after the shooting of disabled passenger Leon Klinghoffer.

Yesterday Abbas surfaced on the Gaza Strip to apologise for the death of Klinghoffer, 69, who was shot at point-blank range and then dumped in the sea. "We are sorry," said Abbas, hinting that he had returned to the Middle East to make peace with Israel.

Abbas heads the Palestine Liberation Front, a tiny rogue faction whose actions have often embarrassed PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat.

For many years, Abbas showed no remorse over the 1985 hijacking. In 1990, he said that while the world wept for Klinghoffer, no one mourned Palestinian victims.

In his 30-minute interview Abbas did not mention Klinghoffer, but made it clear he regretted that his men threw the American pensioner overboard.

Asked about the hijacking, Abbas said: "We didn't plan at all to hijack the ship. The hijacking was a mistake, and there were no orders to kill civilians."

Abbas and other guerrilla leaders have returned from their hiding places to Gaza City for a session of the Palestine National Council [PNC], the Palestinians' parliament-in-exile. Surrounded by armed bodyguards, Abbas, 48, said: "It is time to forget the past. We must open a new page in the relations with Israel."

Abbas said that he supported Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking and suggested he would vote in favor of revoking sections of the PLO charter calling for Israel's destruction.

The PNC is expected to hold the crucial vote on amending the charter this week. 'Arafat has promised the Israelis he would push through the changes before May 7.

Yesterday, as international mediators continued their shuttle diplomacy throughout the Middle East, Israeli Premier Shim'on Peres vowed to carry on bombing Hizballah targets until they agreed to stop firing rockets into northern Israel.

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And US Secretary of State Warren Christopher devised a last-minute plan for a ceasefire, which he presented yesterday to Syria's President al-Asad.

**Palestinian Affairs: Committee Reveals Israeli Order To Expropriate More Land**

*JN2304075696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The National and Islamic committee for opposing settlement activity has uncovered an Israeli military order to expropriate tens of square kilometers of land east of the green line. The committee said in a statement that the aim of expropriating these areas is to adjust the border unilaterally, relying on the use of force and on preventing citizens from using bypass roads without obtaining special permits. The committee considered the military order a new attempt to perpetuate settlement activity in Palestine and annex large areas of land with the aim of judaizing the infrastructure and preventing the establishment of a geographically cohesive homeland enjoying full sovereignty.

Legislative Council Member Zahran Abu-Qubaytah said that the Israeli military order contravenes all Palestinian-Israeli agreements, noting said that there is an experts committee in the Legislative Council which monitors all developments in the homeland.

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## Algeria

### Algeria: Foreign Ministry Condemns Israel's 'Barbaric' Action

*LD1804204096 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The official spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received with indignation [news of] the appalling massacre Israel has carried out against the UN forces center in southern Lebanon [UNIFIL] killing 100 civilians who had sought refuge in an attempt to escape the blind bombardment of the Israeli warplanes.

The Algerian government strongly condemns this barbaric and unjustified act which falls within the logic of terror and murder which Israel has been implementing barbarically for eight days against innocent civilians.

The Algerian government, which is following with great concern the serious developments of the situation in Lebanon, is calling once again upon the international community, especially the Security Council members, to work for an immediate cessation of the recurrent aggressions — which cannot be accepted — on Lebanese sovereignty and on the Lebanese soil and for the respect of the Security Council Resolution 425 which calls for the full and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the Lebanese strip which is still occupied by Israel.

[Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic at 1830 GMT on 18 April reports the following: "Mr Ahmed Attaf, the foreign affairs minister, left Cairo this morning after participating in the proceedings of the extraordinary session of the Arab foreign ministers' council which was held yesterday at the Arab League headquarters.

["Mr Ahmed Attaf delivered a speech at this meeting in which he affirmed Algeria's support and solidarity with the steadfast Lebanese people. He also called on the international community to reject the continuation of the policy of force and hegemony practised by Israel, affirming the need not to confuse the victim with the aggressor. In his speech, Mr Attaf also called for confronting this challenge, pointing out that the current developments represent a challenge to the Arab world's capability for collective action, for unification of stances over interests and common goals, and for the mobilization of potentials for confronting them."]

### Algeria: Lebanese Envoy on Algerian Solidarity, Expectations

*LD2204221096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abd-al-Majid al-Qasir, the Lebanese ambassador in Lebanon, has been moved by the show of solidarity by the Algerian people with the people of Lebanon. He spoke to Amal Lapassi.

[Begin al-Qasir recording] Over the last 10 days I have received messages of solidarity, friendship, and fraternity from our Algerian brothers. Today, in particular, I was moved when I saw more signs of friendship, fraternity, and solidarity toward my country. [end recording]

A UN General Assembly session is scheduled to take place tomorrow with a speech by Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. What does Lebanon expect from that meeting? The Lebanese ambassador to Algiers says what he expects from that meeting:

[Begin al-Qasir recording]] I believe that suitable measures will be taken. Sufficient pressure should be placed on Israel for this attack to cease. We expect this attack to end. [end recording]

### Algeria: Party Leaders Make Statements After Meeting With Zeroual

*LD2004195296 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The president of the republic received this morning Hachemi Cherif, the secretary-general of the Ettahadi Movement, and Said Saadi, the secretary-general of the Rally for Culture and Democracy.

After the meeting, Cherif made a statement to the press saying that the dialogue is a gain which should be deepened in order to extricate the country from its current dangerous situation.

He said that priority now should be given to stopping the bloodshed by eliminating terrorism completely.

Cherif said that his movement's aspirations consist of establishing a new political climate by changing the constitution before holding the legislative elections.

Said Saadi did not make any statement after the meeting with the president, but the Rally for Culture and Democracy, led by him, issued a statement saying that President Liamine Zeroual, expressed his views during the meeting with Saadi about the organization of the dialogue.

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The statement said that the dialogue revolves around reviewing the laws about the elections, political parties, and the establishment of a senate and a state council.

**Algeria: Two Car Bombs Reportedly Explode in Algiers 19 Apr**

*LD2104182996 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, according to today's press, a series of car bomb attacks — mostly thwarted — has been recorded over the last few days in the Algiers region. A booby-trapped truck reportedly exploded on Friday evening [19 April] in the vicinity of a security forces roadblock in Algiers' southeastern suburb — nobody was hurt; and on the morning of the same day a booby-trapped van reportedly exploded against a bridge in southeast Algiers — it is not known if anyone was hurt.

**Algeria: 6 Islamists Killed in Algiers Shoot-Out**

*LD1804190896 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 18 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, six armed Islamists were killed in a clash which lasted nearly 12 hours in the heights of Bab el-Oued, in Algiers. Twenty-nine Islamists have been killed over the last two days in Oran and Tizi-Ouzou.

## Egypt

**Egypt: 'Vanguards of Conquest' Urge Strikes on U.S., Israeli Targets**

*MM2204145796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 22 Apr 96 p 3*

[Unattributed report: "'Vanguards of Conquest' Threaten To Strike U.S. and Israeli Targets"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH — The "Vanguards of Conquest Organization — Egypt" has threatened to strike "U.S. and Israeli targets everywhere."

The organization's information office said this in a statement entitled "Blood, Not Tears, Is the Reply to the Cowardly Aggression in Lebanon." AL-HAYAH has received a copy of the statement. The statement says: "We call on ourselves and Muslims from Amanallah [as transliterated] (Manila) to Juwan Hani [as transliterated] (Guyana) to sacrifice their lives and possessions and hit U.S. and Israeli targets everywhere in support of God's religion and in defense of Muslims' land. We have no other option but to fight for the sake of God's cause. Let the world know that Muslims are coming...to uphold the word of God, apply God's law, and strengthen God's religion on earth in spite of the idols...all the idols."

**Egypt: Mubarak Assassination Suspect—Kidnapping of Americans 'in the Cards'**

*MM2204142896 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Apr 96 p 5*

[Interview with Mustafa Hamzah, alias Abu-Hazim, "prime suspect in the case of the attempt on the life of the Egyptian president," by Ahmad Muwaffaq Zaydan in Konar, Afghanistan; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Zaydan] Could you tell us about yourself and your position in the Egyptian Islamic Group?

[Hamzah] My name is Mustafa Ahmad Hasan Hamzah, one of the sons of the Islamic Group in Egypt. I was born in Markaz Biba in Bani Suwayf Governorate, and I obtained a BSc degree in agricultural sciences from Cairo University in 1979. I spent seven years in prison in connection with the Jihad organization case concerning the assassination of (the late President) Anwar al-Sadat. I stayed a year in Egypt after that and then I traveled abroad. I am 38.

[Zaydan] How and when did you leave Egypt, and where did you go?

[Hamzah] I left Egypt in December 1989 and headed for Sudan, where I stayed for a month. Then I went to Pakistan and from there to Afghanistan, where I stayed for three-and-a-half years, during which time I fought alongside several Afghan organizations.

[Zaydan] When did you leave Afghanistan?

[Hamzah] I move in and out of Afghanistan. The last time was in 1994, then I returned [to stay there].

[Zaydan] How did the perpetrators of the attempt on the life of President Husni Mubarak enter Ethiopia, especially as you are the prime suspect in the case?

[Hamzah] We issued statements and clarified all aspects of the matter. I say now that we have no link with any state or organization with regard to that attempt. It was the Egyptian Islamic Group and its sons that carried out the attempt in terms both of planning and implementation. Everything from A to Z was the work of the Islamic Group's sons. The rumors about the involvement of other quarters are baseless. I believe that Egyptian and Ethiopian security services and the U.S. FBI have ascertained these facts. There are political matters with which they are dealing, but we have nothing to do with these matters. All this is recorded in the investigations conducted with the brothers held in Ethiopia. Some of the brothers had come from Sudan...one or two from Pakistan. This is documented at the airport and with the Ethiopian

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security service. Seventy-five percent of the elements had come from Pakistan; one or two from Sudan. [sentences as published] The only aim was to carry out the operation.

[Zaydan] Egypt accused Sudan of facilitating the operation, and you say that one or two individuals entered Ethiopia via Sudan. So how did you contact them, and how did they enter Sudan?

[Hamzah] The person concerned with the matter was brother Sharif 'Abd-al-Rahman, known as 'Umar al-Masri. He arranged everything from A to Z, making use of the brothers who had returned to Sudan from Pakistan and were preparing to infiltrate across the Egyptian border. This is known to the Egyptian security service. But the brother preferred to make use of them both, especially as they have a dark complexion, like the Ethiopians. He arranged for them to enter individually, and the Ethiopians know that they entered the country legally, as they had obtained visas from the Ethiopian Embassy in Khartoum. They know, but everything that is happening is a political dispute they wanted to stir up with Sudan, a political dispute which is nothing to do with us. Even those who went to Ethiopia from Pakistan were carrying passports from an Arab state.

[Zaydan] So how does the Islamic Group view the Sudanese Government?

[Hamzah] On the whole, our policy supports anyone who applies Islam. It is our general rule. However, our disagreements with the Sudanese Government are deep. We are salafis [reformists] in terms of the doctrine, line, and movement. They (the Sudanese) are operating away from the salafi line, advocating the idea of revising jurisprudence rules, and moving away from the venerable forefathers' line. The disagreement over such aspects makes it difficult to agree with them. The interests governing their thinking are far from the forefathers' understanding. And their application of Islam is distorted and clearly deviant. When I visited Sudan I saw no Islamic effect in people's life but, instead, media cries advocating jihad in the south. The Sudanese deal with matters on the basis of interests: One time they ally with Egypt and another time with [Eritrean President] Isaias Afwerki. Their position toward the Eritrean jihad is clear. They abandoned it for the sake of Afwerki, who has now turned against them.

Regarding the position on the United States, we are clear, since it does not want Islam to rule. As for them (the Sudanese), they are expressing to it their wish to engage in a dialogue. And I believe their position on Israel is somewhat ambiguous. If a treaty is signed between Syria and the Zionist entity, they will accept the reality — which is rejected religiously and logically.

[Zaydan] A blockade will be imposed on the Sudanese because of you and the Islamic Group. How do you feel about that?

[Hamzah] I have nothing to do with that. The brothers' effort focused entirely on getting rid of Mubarak, because he represents a major obstacle to world Islamic movements. This is the aspect that governed our work. We have nothing to do with political disputes with some regimes. the Sudanese people are the victim of these disputes.

We have no brothers in Sudan. As for the other brother (suspect), he is in another state and will emerge soon. There is no third person as reported. We want through our interviews to prove that the Sudanese people have nothing to do with the matter. And we are ready to lift any injustice surrounding them. We say before God that the Sudanese have nothing to do with us.

[Zaydan] Where were you when the Addis Ababa operation took place, and when did you last arrive in Afghanistan?

[Hamzah] I was in Afghanistan when the operation took place. I was moving between Pakistan and Afghanistan. I was not in Sudan.

[Zaydan] How did you enter and leave Ethiopia?

[Hamzah] That is a security matter, and the Ethiopian security service knows that we entered with passports from an Arab state and with visas. I stress that I did not enter [Ethiopia] from Sudan. They know this, and one of the detainees also knows.

[Zaydan] Why did you choose Ethiopia for the attempt on the Egyptian president's life?

[Hamzah] There was a plan to assassinate Mubarak some two-and-a-half years ago, as he was scheduled to arrive there with UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali and other African leaders. Mubarak was the target, but the operation was canceled for certain reasons. Then we sent a brother to Ethiopia. He got married there and established contacts with the Ethiopians, who helped us later in the attempt.

[Zaydan] You have not answered my question: What is your position in the Group?

[Hamzah] They [not further identified] say that I am one of the officials, but this is exaggerated. I am one of the Group's sons.

[Zaydan] We knew from the individuals you sent to us that they are supporters and defenders of the Taleban movement, and I have heard that you stayed in Qandahar, Taleban's stronghold. What truth is there in this?

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[Hamzah] We protect no one, nor are we protected by anyone. Islam is applied well in the areas controlled by the brothers in Taleban. Those living there have no security problems such as banditry, compared with what is happening in the areas controlled by the other parties. We move from one place to another, and thus we testify that their areas are safe, and numerous Islamic rites are applied there. We are not under their protection, and they know nothing about us. We lived in their areas for some time. Their areas are safe and better than the other areas.

[Zaydan] Can you say that you are trying to topple the Egyptian regime from Afghanistan, from this isolated room in the middle of the mountains?

[Hamzah] I am just an individual, and the Group does not rely on one person. Our main effort is inside Egypt. As for those abroad, their role is secondary.

[Zaydan] What is your justification for killing tourists and attacking jewelry shops?

[Hamzah] In all its moves and actions the Group proceeds from a religious premise. It does nothing before seeking fatwas from good ulema. All our actions are based on fatwas issued by approved ulema. When there is a fatwa, we study the benefits, potential side effects, and then the ability to implement it. We are dealing with tourists gently. We warned them for a whole year. We gave them an excuse and warned them. [sentence as published]

[Zaydan] What is your relationship with 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman? And what truth is there in what was reported recently about your warning to Washington not to continue to hold Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman in prison?

[Hamzah] The Group is eager to continue the relationship, since he is the Group's mufti and amir. He is referred to in one way or another with regard to any questions concerning the Group. The question of kidnapping Americans as a ransom for the shaykh is in the cards, not ruled out, and under consideration. We have in the past warned the United States through our statements, and the matter depends on the capabilities and favorable circumstances for achieving what we want. Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman is a great figure at the Islamic world level, and we are thinking of how to arrive at something that would persuade the U.S. Government to release him.

[Zaydan] What is the nature of your relationship with the Algerian Armed Islamic Group [GIA]? And what is your opinion of the fact that it claimed responsibility for the murder of Mohamed Said and Abderezak Redjam?

[Hamzah] We support the GIA fully in all its actions against the Algerian Government, which usurped Muslims' power. There are operations over which there are differing religious views. We as the Islamic Group excuse them, because they have to determine the nature of the confrontation for themselves. Our moves in Egypt are similar to those of our brothers in Algeria. We do not support the murder of Said and Redjam. In fact we strongly denounce it.

**Egypt: Parliamentary Committee Condemns U.S. Support of Lebanon Attacks**

*NC2204143696 Cairo MENA in English 1346 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, April 22 (MENA)—The People's Assembly committee for Arab affairs today slammed the U.S. for giving the green light for the 12-day Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

The U.S. is flagrantly and fully supporting the Israeli bloody terrorism, according to a statement released by the committee following a meeting chaired by Dr. Tulbah 'Uwaydah.

Highlighting Washington's international and media backing for the Israeli blitz, the committee singled out America's blocking of a UN Security Council resolution to condemn the Jewish state.

**Egypt: Papers Condemn U.S. Support for Israel, Qana Massacre**

*NC2204093596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)—The echoes of the bestial massacre the Israeli military forces committed against civilians in Qana village in southern Lebanon continue to be the focus of the editorials in today's Cairo newspapers. These newspapers express their shock over Israel's belligerence, which went so far as to prevent ranking Israeli officials from expressing their regrets over the horrendous crime they committed. This crime places them at the top of the list of terrorists in the world, the papers say. At the same time, the newspapers criticize the U.S. position, which applies double standards in the region. The newspapers accuse the U.S. Administration of having given Israel the green light to carry out its bestial operations in the Lebanese village of Qana.

Under the headline "Massacres With a Green Light," AL-AHRAM writes that the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict reveals that the United States has given Israel the green light twice. And twice, the results have been massacres, in which scores of Lebanese and Palestinian

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civilians were killed. The man who gave the green light the first time round was General Alexander Haig, the first secretary of state in former U.S. President Ronald Reagan's administration. The result of that was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, during which Israel committed the Sabra and Shatila massacres against the Palestinians.

The paper notes that the second time the United States gave Israel the green light was for the current Israeli military operation against Lebanon, which resulted in hundreds of innocent civilians being killed in Qana village.

The newspaper says: The Americans justified their green light to Israel by claiming that Israel has a legitimate right to defend itself — the first time around against the attacks from the Palestinian resistance and the second time around against the Lebanese Hizballah attacks. The paper wonders: Where is the voice of their conscience, against the massacre of defenseless civilians who fled to the camps?

AL-AKHBAR, for its part, explains in its comment that U.S. diplomacy in the Security Council exerted efforts to thwart the Egyptian draft resolution under the pretext that it condemned Israel but did not condemn the so-called Hizballah. Instead, the United States exerted efforts to issue a resolution that calls only for stopping the fighting and equating the victim with the aggressor.

The paper points out that a resolution in this form becomes a reward for Israel, which has gotten what it wants at a time when it is doing as it pleases and disciplining by force whomever it wishes, while biding time, time during which diplomatic efforts are trying to appease it just to halt its belligerence.

The newspaper wonders: After this, is it logical to talk about a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, particularly while the Israeli aggression continues? The result of this Israeli aggression has been 147 dead and 120 wounded from among the Lebanese civilians who were seeking shelter at the UN base in Qana. However, the Israeli artillery had no mercy on them, and leveled the building they were in, killing and injuring an entire group of refugees who were seeking safety.

Under the headline "Israel's Complex", AL-JUMHURIYAH criticizes the new international order. The paper says this order has revealed its ugly face, because it is unable to condemn the Israeli aggression on Lebanon and impose resolutions forcing Israel to withdraw from the Lebanese territories.

The newspaper affirms that Israel fights, kills, and commits whatever massacres it pleases in Lebanon just for the sake of killing and bloodshed. The paper notes that, nevertheless, Israel will not achieve more than it deserves at the negotiating table, and will not be able to guarantee absolute security for itself. The paper points out that Israel has failed to attain its political objectives of providing security for its northern settlements because of its aggressive policies against the Lebanese people and the occupation of a part of Lebanon's territory.

The paper says Israel does not respect any laws or international principles. It has not adhered to an agreement and has not preserved its security by respecting others' safety and sovereignty over their territories. Israel has always preferred the policy of aggression and occupation of the land of others.

The newspaper affirms that true security cannot be attained through the use of force and weapons. It is attained, rather, through respect for the security of other countries; agreement with them; and adherence to international resolutions, laws, and treaties.

For its part, the newspaper AL-WAFD says Israel's attacks on and aggressions against Lebanon have offered to the enemies of peace a gift none of them dreamed they could get. The paper says that Israel might win the battle, but it will certainly lose all the Arabs. Not a single Arab will accept peace over the dead bodies of children. Not a single Arab will allow Israeli tanks to step all over his dignity so that he participates in the peace process.

The paper affirms that popular Arab anger over the crime Israel committed against the Lebanese people is the most appropriate response to those who are rushing after a fragile peace and applauding forced normalization.

The paper adds that this popular Arab consensus to condemn the Israeli aggression against Lebanon is like a referendum that reveals the pent up Arab anger over the illusive peace.

### Egypt: De Charette Tells Musa Negotiations 'Facing Difficulties'

*NC2204154096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1525 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)— Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa received a telephone call this afternoon from his French counterpart Herve de Charette, who is in Damascus.

Musa told reporters that the French foreign minister told him that the ongoing negotiations on the Lebanese crisis are still facing difficulties and that a cease-fire is being sought.

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He added that the French minister told him that he is coordinating with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is also in Damascus.

He pointed out that de Charette expressed his hopes that efforts will produce something by tomorrow, Tuesday.

Asked about the U.S. initiative, Musa said: The U.S. initiative is still under consideration.

**Egypt: Al-Azhar Imam—Defending Lebanese 'Religious Duty'**

*NC1904153096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1433 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo; 19 Apr (MENA) — Grand Imam His Eminence Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, shaykh of the holy al-Azhar, has emphasized the duty to defend its brothers in Lebanon and to stand by them physically and morally because it is the right thing to do.

In his Friday sermon today, al-Azhar's shaykh said: This is a religious duty of every Muslim imposed on all of us by Almighty God. If we fail, God will severely bring us to account for it in the world hereafter. As for this world, cowardice leads to the humiliation of our nation, and God does not want this to happen to his faithful people.

Meanwhile, His Eminence Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi stressed that yesterday's terrorist incident in an al-Haram street that killed 18 people and wounded 14 others is something not sanctioned by the shari'ah. He said it is one of the ugliest crimes prohibited by all God-given religions.

Al-Azhar's shaykh asked what was the guilt of women, children, and elderly people who came to Egypt and complied with this country's laws.

He said the right jihad is for you to blow up yourself in the midst of your enemies who fight you and usurp your land, but to blow yourself up amid women, children, and elderly people, some of whom are Muslims and some not, this is not jihad or martyrdom.

**Egypt: Judge Points Finger at Iran, Israel's Mosad for Cairo Killings**

*BR2204114996 Rome IL MESSAGGERO in Italian 21 Apr 96 p 9*

[Interview with Said al-Ashmawy, former head of the Egyptian Supreme State Security Court, by Valerio Pellizzari in Cairo; date not given: "Egypt: Responsibility Claimed for Massacre; It Was Directed Against Israel"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — Said al-Ashmawy was head of Cairo's criminal court and head of the Supreme State Security Court until 1993. Egypt's most important judge. For the past 16 years he has lived with an armed guard at the entrance to his apartment and another at the main door of the building. He is on the list of the terrorists' top targets. He still believes in a form of Islamic humanism, in an ethical system based on the Koran that will spread harmony through the world.

[Pellizzari] What do you think now, following the pyramids massacre?

[Al-Ashmawy] It is not easy to know. But there are two possibilities: Either the terrorists acted on orders from the Iranians, who are active not only with the Hizballah in Lebanon but also in many Gulf countries. Or Mosad, the Israeli secret service, infiltrated the pyramids commando in order to prompt a tide of outrage in favor of Israel.

[Pellizzari] The statement in which the terrorists claimed responsibility for the attack contains a reference to the police, who supposedly changed the Israeli party's itinerary at the last moment.

[Al-Ashmawy] I believe something different — more obvious, less tortuous. We have known for years that Israelis are a target. Tourists from other countries are not necessarily so. The level of protection is different.

[Pellizzari] During your trials, did you identify any sponsors abroad?

[Al-Ashmawy] The main ones are the Saudis, who aspire to the leadership of the Sunnite Muslims; and the Iranians, who enjoy the support of the Shiites. Saudi Arabia supplies mainly money, through well identified banks in Geneva and elsewhere. Iran, however, mainly procures weapons, which go to Sudan and enter Egypt from there.

[Pellizzari] When will this tide of violence subside?

[Al-Ashmawy] Violence draws violence. I am not optimistic. It will not end soon. This, partly because the government is pursuing an erroneous path to counter the extremists. In order to contain them it uses the police and courts martial, which do not resolve the problem at the root.

[Pellizzari] What should it do?

[Al-Ashmawy] These are deviant groups; they know Islam only through slogans. These extremists may even be recruited in the poorest neighborhoods, but the real common framework is ignorance. This is the real reason for their fanaticism. Thus they are able to intimidate all sectors of the state apparatus. In order for the government to make real progress it must intervene vis-a-vis the Al Azhar mosque, which is an very important

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reference point for Muslims and which was headed by an extremist shaykh until a few weeks ago. And it must intervene vis-a-vis the media, which are too tolerant of extremists.

[Pellizzari] What kind of threats do you receive?

[Al-Ashmawy] I want to state quite clearly that the extremists have never protested my sentences. They respected me as a judge. This, partly because when there is a state of emergency the authorities exploit the opportunity to settle old scores. They are against me because of what I write, because of my vision of Islam. I studied at Harvard and am acquainted with the Western world, but I remain a Muslim. From the moment I awake until I go to sleep I try to follow the heavenly law that binds man to the world around him. I do not act according to slogans.

[Pellizzari] Is intimidation by extremists very widespread?

[Al-Ashmawy] It is their method. They intimidated civil judges, and the courts did not work, so the government entrusted justice to courts martial. But I am against this transfer of roles. No civilian must be judged by a court martial for any reason.

[Pellizzari] How does the state defend itself against the terrorists' attack?

[Al-Ashmawy] I am very well aware that this is a country with a high level of unemployment and that when tourism is threatened, it affects millions of people working around the hotels. But the government cannot compete with the Islamic extremists by trying to show itself to be observant of the Koran, as religious as them or even more so, and then entrust repression to the military.

**Egypt: Opposition Parties Denounce U.S. 'Threats' Against Libya**

*NC2104133996 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 15 Apr 96 p 4*

[FBIS Translated Text] The opposition parties have issued a statement denouncing the U.S. threats against Libya. The statement was signed by Diya'-al-Din Dawud for the Nasirite Arab Democratic Party, Ibrahim Shukri for the Labor Party, Khalid Muhyi-al-Din for the National Progressive Unionist Grouping, Mustafa Kamil Murad for the Liberal Party, and Ibrahim Badrawi for the Communist Party.

The following is the text of the statement: For a long time, the world's peoples have been demanding that the United States return to reason and lift its hand off the Security Council so that it in turn will lift the unjust embargo against sister Libya. For a long time, the world's peoples have been demanding that the United States listen to the voice of international justice and abandon its double standard policy, by which it deals with countries according to the selfish interests of the ruling U.S. circles.

When it transpired that the United States could not issue a new resolution tightening the sanctions on Libya, it also became clear that some international quarters that want to break from the sphere of U.S. influence were themselves unable to lift this embargo completely.

During this time, U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry set off a bombshell during his recent visit to the region. He said that Libya is building a huge chemical weapons plant in Tarhunah and that the United States would deal with this matter militarily. He then backed down and said that a military solution would be a last resort.

This new U.S. threat to Libya has come to cover-up the new U.S.-Israeli strategic agreement under which the United States will allow and defend Israel's possession of nuclear weapons. It has also come to divert attention away from reports on a radioactive leak from the Dimona nuclear reactor and on toxic waste being buried in the Negev desert. This matter poses real dangers for the whole Arab region, particularly in northeast Africa and northwest Asia. Undoubtedly, this threat has also been issued to serve the electoral purposes of the U.S. Administration. Be it because of the first, second, or third objective, this threat is not based on any real fact but on clear U.S. thuggery and a U.S. desire to play the role of the world's bad policeman.

We do not address our statement to the United States because we do not trust it. We address our statement to the Arab people so that they may understand the nature of the U.S. aggression and so that they may confront it with all possible means, including striking the U.S. interests in all the Arab countries, if the United States carries out its threats to attack Libya. We urge the Arab League and the Arab governments to reject the U.S. thuggery, to reject the U.S. claim that it is the policeman of the region, and to inform the United States that the Israeli nuclear danger is the real danger to our people and region. We also urge all progressive, peace-loving, and freedom-loving forces to struggle and step up their activity against U.S. aggression and to put pressure on the Arab governments to bring about an end to the unjust and illegal embargo against sister Libya.

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**Egypt: Security Chief Killed in Shootout With Islamic Militants**

*NC2304111996 Paris AFP in English*
*1051 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minya, Egypt, April 23 (AFP) — A security chief in Egypt's troubled southern province of Asyut was killed Tuesday [23 April] in a shoot-out with Islamic militants, police said.

General Jamal Fa'iq was shot dead in a dawn clash between a large force of security police and wanted militants holed up in the countryside 300 kilometres (180 miles) south of Cairo.

Two other police officers, a lieutenant and lieutenant-colonel, were wounded in the clash. Their condition was unknown.

The region is a stronghold of the al-Jama'a al-Islamiyah, Egypt's main Islamic militant group, which claimed responsibility for last Thursday's slaughter of 18 Greek tourists near the Giza pyramids.

**Egypt: Musa To Pay 'Quick' Visit to Greece 23 Apr**

*NC2204164996 Cairo MENA in Arabic*
*1630 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Apr (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that he will pay a quick visit to Greece tomorrow, Tuesday. He said that the visit will give him the opportunity to express Egypt's regret for the terrorist incident that targeted Greek tourists on al-Haram street recently.

Musa added that the visit will also give him the chance to hold talks with Greek officials, since Greece is a member of the Euromediterranean Cooperation Conference and the Mediterranean Forum.

Musa pointed out that talks with the Greek side will cover all the vital issues under consideration in the arena, as well as bilateral ties. He also said that he will get acquainted with the new Greek foreign minister, who invited him to visit Athens.

The foreign minister pointed out that the talks will also touch on the situation in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.

On his visit to Turkey, which was postponed from last week in view of developments in Lebanon, Musa said that the new date will be determined by consultations between the two sides.

## Libya

**Libya: Al-Qadhdhafi—U.S., Israeli Aim 'Destruction of Egypt'**

*LD2004152796 Tripoli JANA in English*
*1433 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, al Tayr [April] 20, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The leader of the revolution stressed that the attempts of the Western crusade to impose a blockade on Sudan is part of a series aimed at stifling and destroying the Arab nation.

The leader pointed out 'these attempts are, firstly, aimed at the blockading of Iraq then Libya towards imposing a blockade on Egypt. For once Libya was subjected to a blockade on the western flank of Egypt and blockaded Sudan on its southern flank and the Israeli enemy is on its eastern flank rendering Egypt under blockade. [no ending quotation mark as received]

The leader of the revolution asserted that the aim of America and the Israelis, at the final stage, is the destruction of Egypt for it is the biggest power in the Arab homeland.

During the international press conference in the presence of a massive number of correspondents of international news agencies, satellite T.V networks, newspapers and magazines from all over the world, the leader said 'once Sudan, to the south of Egypt, becomes a banned area and Libya, to the west of Egypt, becomes a banned area and considering that there is the sea to the north and the Israeli enemy to the south, Egypt will become under siege. For Egypt has no geographical extensions except through Sudan and Libya. Hence any blockade on Sudan and any blockade on Libya will mean the stifling of Egypt. In the light of the current situation in Lebanon, Jordan's reception of NATO forces, Iraq is under blockade and Turkey is receiving the Israeli forces, all this means the stifling of Syria. [no ending quotation mark as received]

The leader added 'the blockading of Sudan is in fact a tightening of the blockade on Egypt for once Sudan is blockaded and Libya is blockaded, Egypt too will become blockaded. It is very clear that they are heading for Egypt. At the final stage, the aim of America and the Israelis is the destruction of Egypt for the latter is the biggest power. [no ending quotation mark as received]

**Libya: Tripoli To Continue To Fly Pilgrims to Saudi Arabia**

*LD1904135196 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear brothers, we have just received the following. Brother leader of the revolution

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[al-Qadhdhafi] has given the following statement to the Jamahiriyah news agency [JANA]:

Libya will continue transporting its pilgrims with its own airplanes. Discussion of this matter by the so-called Security Council is a prevention by the Christian states — who dominate the referred to council — of Muslims from practicing their religion. It supports the dysfunctioning of one of the pillars of Islam and would be a provocation by the Security Council to start a new Crusade war.

## Morocco

### Morocco: House of Representatives Condemns Israeli Attacks

*LD1904151296 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The House of Representatives strongly condemned Israel's criminal acts against fraternal Lebanon and called on the international community and all governments and organizations to take practical, actual, and speedy steps to stop this bloodbath to which the Lebanese people are subjected.

In a statement issued today, the House stressed that while following with deep concern and profound sorrow the grave escalation of Israel's criminal operations which targeted fraternal Lebanon and exposed its innocent citizens to bestial massacres, and which is rejected by every living conscience and denounced by the logic of humanity, and faced with these grave developments which threaten security and peace in the area, the House expresses its strong condemnation of and indignation at this aggressive operation against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

The House also expresses its total solidarity with the Lebanese people in their ordeal and calls on the international community and all governments and organizations to take practical, actual, and speedy steps to stop this bloodbath to which the fraternal people of Lebanon are subjected, and to help them in every material and moral way to overcome this tragic situation.

The House also demands that the Security Council ensure the immediate implementation of UN resolution 425, calling on the International Parliamentary Federation, whose conference coincides with this aggression, to openly condemn and denounce it.

The House appeals to the Arab states to stand before this vicious onslaught with the necessary decisiveness and firmness in order to protect the dignity of the Arab people.

The House also expresses its full respect and reverence to the souls of the martyrs and innocent victims of this treacherous aggression and offers its sincere condolences to the Lebanese people.

### Morocco: Iranian Foreign Minister Arrives for Talks on Lebanon

*LD2204164496 Tehran IRNA in English 1614 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Fes, April 22, IRNA — Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Fes, Maghreb [Morocco], on Monday [22 April] to pursue his peace efforts to end Israel's bloody campaign of state terrorism in Lebanon, now in its 12th day.

Velayati is to deliver a message from President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to Maghreb's ruler King Hassan. He will also have meetings with premier and foreign minister of the north African country on bilateral ties and the Middle East developments.

Velayati had earlier called for holding an extraordinary session of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), under the chairmanship of Maghreb, to discuss the Lebanon situation and adopting a common stance against the inhuman Zionist crimes in Lebanon.

### Morocco: Iran's Velayati Meets King, Calls For OIC Role in Lebanon

*NC2304074096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Velayati met with King Hassan of Morocco in Fes last night and handed him a message from our President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. During the meeting, the latest diplomatic efforts in Damascus, as well as the need to use the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] to end the aggression by the regime occupying Jerusalem against Lebanon were discussed.

The Central News Unit reports that during this meeting, Velayati referred to the Zionist regime's aggression against the defenseless people of Lebanon, adding: Morocco's efforts, in its capacity as the current chairman of the OIC, to call a special meeting of the foreign ministers could be extremely useful to the Lebanese people who have been harmed by the bombing of Zionist aircraft.

Emphasizing the usefulness of a collective reaction in preventing the Zionist regime's aggression against the Lebanese Muslims, our foreign minister called for the convening of an extraordinary session of the OIC foreign ministers.

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During the meeting, the Moroccan king warmly welcomed the message from the Iranian president, saying: Iran's proposal will be examined by the OIC secretariat.

Also during Velayati's meeting with the Moroccan prime minister and foreign minister, the need to get the OIC involved in preventing Zionist attacks on the defenseless people of Lebanon and the steps that the OIC should take to protect the Lebanese people were discussed. Referring to the hostility of both America and the Zionist regime to the Muslims, Velayati underlined the need for the Islamic countries to adopt common stands to confront the warmongering policies of the Zionist regime in the Middle East.

During the meeting, Moroccan Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali [title as heard] expressed doubts about Israel's claim to be seeking peace and criticized the Israeli regime's aggressive policies.

Our correspondent reports that Velayati returned to Damascus after these meetings.

## Sudan

### Sudan: Foreign Minister Taha on UN Resolution, U.S. Stance

*NC2104085596 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Apr 96 p 4*

[Report on remarks by Sudanese Foreign Minister 'Ali 'Uthman Muhammad Taha by 'Amir 'Abd-al-Mun'im at a "private meeting at the house of the Sudanese ambassador in Cairo" on 12 April]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] On the UN Security Council resolution on Sudan, Sudanese Foreign Minister 'Ali Taha said: After the issuance of the resolution in January, additional efforts were made to address the issue that lies at the heart of the resolution. I would like to tell our brothers here in Egypt that we know the magnitude of the problem that resulted from the attempt to assassinate President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa; we know that this is unprecedented in the history of Egyptian-Sudanese relations and that it extremely complicated things in the entire region — Sudan, Egypt, and Ethiopia — and we know that much has been said about Sudan in this regard.

He added: I would like, first of all, to say frankly and clearly that in today's world, thanks to the media, mass communications, and intelligence, facts cannot be concealed for long. Such major issues, therefore, must be based on facts, not sentiments and emotions.

He went on: It is true that the government in Sudan has an Islamic orientation, but it is also true that this Islamic-oriented government does not sanction political assassination or violence. The Sudanese Government is clearly adhering to this principle in its handling of political opponents at home and abroad. Sudan's political record, both before and since the National Salvation government, shows nothing contrary to this fact.

The Sudanese foreign minister said: No matter what allegations any country is making regarding the Sudanese Government's involvement in the Addis Ababa incident, I tell you, out of a firm conviction and based on my knowledge of the facts and details and in the name of the Sudanese Government, that these allegations are untrue. We have always demanded that those who are accusing us produce their proof and evidence.

He added: What is taking place now in the Security Council is indeed a distortion of facts. They are telling us that they have evidence that some countries do not want to disclose because of its confidentiality and the sensitivity of the sources. We ask: How can they try someone and condemn him to death without producing a single piece of evidence on the pretext that this evidence is secret?

We are not asking that the sources of the information be disclosed. We are talking about the information itself. Strangely, the three people who are being tried in Ethiopia in connection with this case are being tried secretly by a closed court. How can this be explained when the Ethiopian Government is basing its accusations against Sudan on the statements of these people? How can we not be told what these people—who have caused a complicated crisis in the entire region—are saying?

On the U.S. role in these developments, the Sudanese foreign minister said: We are confident that the United States is trying hard to fish in troubled water. The United States is using this issue to undermine Sudan's relations with Egypt and Ethiopia and to vent its anger and dismay with Sudan — something Washington has been trying to do since 1989. During this reshuffling of the deck, many facts were distorted and lost. Our case with the United States is clear.

The Sudanese foreign minister went on to say: At the latest seminar in Washington, Dacid Shinn, director of the Office of East African Affairs in the U.S. State Department, said that U.S. policy is to isolate Sudan from the neighboring countries in an attempt to make it, as he claims, desist from the policies it is pursuing, above all encouraging terrorism.

There is panic in the United States and in Europe in general because of the spread of the Islamic phenomenon.

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They are confusing the spread of the Islamic phenomenon and its links to what is called the fundamentalist trends and religious extremism. Because Sudan got itself involved and spoke out about the cause of Islam and its application, it was automatically placed in that category. To this should be added Sudan's stand on the Gulf war. Regardless of whether such stands were right or wrong, Sudan did no more than express a stand and an opinion. It did not fight with either the killer or the victims. But it appears that we are living in an age where expressing an independent stand could be construed as a full-blown political crime for which we are found guilty and executed.

These are the real and clear explanations for the U.S. stand on the regime in Sudan. We are not surprised by this. We have taken our stands consciously. Yet we do not make our dispute with the United States part of our religious creed. We have not given up on holding a dialogue with the United States and others.

Regarding the crisis with the neighboring countries, the Sudanese minister said: There are two dimensions to this issue. The first is that pressures were put on these countries before the estrangement. This was done as part of the U.S. campaign to isolate Sudan. Whenever we have met them in private sessions, they told us that very strong pressures were being exerted on them to steer clear of Sudan. Officials at all levels said this. Therefore, the change in the stands of the countries around us was partly caused by these pressures. This does not negate the fact that there is another reason. We have common borders with these countries, who have many ethnic and racial groups that united during the era of struggle and liberation but split up after independence and after taking power. Sudan now hosts around 850,000 refugees from the neighboring countries, including 500,000 Eritrean refugees, despite that country's independence and our talks with the refugee commissions. They share what little we have, and we have never thought of expelling them across the border. But this issue has taken another form because of the internal contradictions in these countries—namely, the claim that this is part of the Sudanese regime's dreams of setting up Islamic regimes in Eritrea and inside Ethiopia. God alone in His seventh heaven knows how far from the truth this allegation is, not because Sudan does not like to see people embracing God's religion in large numbers but because of its conviction that setting an example, not conflicts and political fragmentation, is the ideal way to make masses of people embrace God's religion. This is our conviction, but what can we do? [passage omitted]

**Sudan: Regime Said Holding Contacts To Set Up Relations With Israel**

*NC2304081696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0710 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Apr (MENA)—A Sudanese opposition source in London has disclosed that the Sudanese regime recently made several contacts to establish relations with Israel in a bid to end its international isolation.

In statements published by AL-AHRAM today, the source, who asked not to be named, said that Brigadier General Salah-al-Din Karrar, member of the Revolution Command Council in Sudan and minister of cabinet affairs in the new cabinet, went to Morocco and Qatar last month to explore the possibility of receiving help in initiating contacts with Israel as a prelude to establishing unofficial ties with it.

The source said the Sudanese regime believes it holds cards that could support its position in these contacts, especially as regards its relationship with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

He added that a kind of complete media blackout has been imposed on these contacts between Sudan and Israel.

The Sudanese opposition figure clarified that the ruling regime in Khartoum is seeking through various means to end its international isolation, believing that Israel could be one of the political channels to end this isolation.

**Sudan: President al-Bashir Appoints New Cabinet**

*EA2204201296 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of god, the merciful and the compassionate. The Republican decree appointing the two vice presidents.

The president of the Republic; In accordance with article six of the constitutional order number 13, 1995, I issue the following Republican decree: 1. The appointment of Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih as first vice president of the Republic. 2. The appointment of Police Major General George Kongor Arop as second vice president of the Republic. Signed; Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the Republic.

In the name of God, the compassionate and the merciful. The Republican decree abolishing old and instituting new federal ministries.

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The president of the Republic, in exercise of powers stipulated in accordance with article 18 (1) of the constitutional order number 13,1995, I issue the following Republican decree:

1. Abolition of the following federal ministries. (a) the ministry of agriculture, natural resources, and livestock. (b) the ministry of aviation and survey.

2. Establishment of the following new federal ministries. (a) the ministry of relations in the national assembly. (b) the ministry of agriculture and forestry. (c) the ministry of livestock. (d) the ministry of survey and construction development. (e) the ministry of aviation.

Signed; Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the Republic.

Republican decree appointing advisers to the president of the Republic.

The president of the Republic, in accordance with article seven of the constitutional order number 13, 1995, I issue the following Republican decree: 1. Appointment of Staff Brigadier Bakri Hasan Salih as adviser of the president of the Republic for security. 2. Appointment of Lieutenant Colonel Ibrahim Shams al-Din as adviser to the president of the Republic for defense.

The Republican decree appointing the following federal ministers.

The president of the Republic, in accordance with article five (a) of the constitutional order number 13,1995, I issue the following Republican decree:

The appointment of the federal ministers. 1. Staff Brigadier (engineer) 'Abd-al-Rahim Muhammad Husayn, minister in the office of the presidency. 2. Naval Staff Brigadier (ret) Salah al-Din Muhammad Ahmad Karrar, minister in the council of ministers. 3. Staff Lieutenant General Hasan 'Abd-al-Rahman Ali, minister for national defense. 4. Mr. Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha, minister for external relations. 5. Staff Brigadier Bakri Hasan Salih, minister for internal affairs. 6. Mr. 'Abd-al-Basit Salih Sabdarat, minister for justice. 7. Staff Brigadier Dr. al-Tayyib Ibrahim Muhammad Khayr, minister for information and culture. 8. Dr. Ali al-Hajj Muhammad Minister for Federal Relations. 9. Dr. 'Abd-al-Wahhab Uthman, minister of finance and national economy. 10. Mr. Uthman al-Hadi Ibrahim, minister for external trade. 11. Mr. Badr al-Din Sulayman, minister for national industry. 12. Dr. Nafi Ali Nafi, minister of agriculture and forestry. 13. Mr. Musa Mak Kur, minister for livestock. 14. Dr. Engineer Ya'qub Musa Abu-Shura, minister for irrigation. 15. Dr. Awad Ahmad al-Jaz, minister for energy and mining. 16. Major General (ret) Albino Akol Akol, minister for transport. 17. Major General (ret) al-Hadi Bushra, minister for roads and communications. 18. Colonel Galwak Deng, minister for survey and construction development. 19. Major General (ret) al-Tijani Adam al-Tahir, minister for aviation. 20. Mr. Muhammad Tahir Ela, minister for tourism and environment. 21. Dr. 'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Abd-al-Rahim (Bob), minister of higher education and scientific research. 22. Dr. Kabosho Kuku, minister of education. 23. Mr. Muhammad Uthman Khalifah, minister for social planning. 24. Mr. Angelo Beda, minister for public service. 25. Mrs. Ihsan Abdullah al-Ghabshawi, minister of health. 26. Mr. Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, secretary general of the supreme council for peace. 27. Mr. Abu-al-Qasim Muhammad Ibrahim, minister of relations in the National Assembly. Signed; Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the Republic.

Republican order appointing legal advisers in the office of the president of the Republic.

The president of the Republic; In accordance with article seven of the constitutional order number 13, 1995, I issue the following Republican order:

The appointment of Mr. Ahmad Ibrahim al-Tahir, adviser in the president's office for legal affairs at the status of a federal minister.

Signed; Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, president of the Republic.

In the name of God, the compassionate and the merciful. Republican decree appointing ministers of state.

The president of the Republic; In accordance with article five (a) of the constitutional order number 13, 1995, I issue the following Republican decree:

The following are appointed ministers of state in the federal ministries as follows: 1. Ministry of Foreign Relations; (a) Bishop Gabriel Rorech. (b) Dr. Mustafa Uthman Isma'il. 2. Ministry of Finance and National Economy; (a) Dr. Izz al-Din Ibrahim. (b) Dr. Sabir Muhammad al-Hasan. 3. Ministry for Federal Relations; (a) Dr. Ibrahim Abu-Awf (b) Air Force Staff Brigadier Abdullah Safi Nur. (c) Mr. John (Dhuor). 4. Ministry of Social Planning; (a) Mr. Yusuf 'Abd-al-Fattah Mahmud (b) Dr. Majdhub al-Khalifah Ahmad. (c) Dr. Sa'id Muhammad Busharah. 5. Ministry of Transport; Mr. 'Umar Sulayman. 6. Ministry of Roads and Communications; Staff Naval Major General Sa'id al-Husayni 'Abd-al-Karim. 7. Ministry of Public Service; Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Nur al-Din 8. Ministry of Livestock; Dr. Adam Muhammad (Balo). Signed by my own hand on 20 April 1996. Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir.

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**Sudan: Attacks Mark 'New Escalation' in Opposition Activity**

*MM2204152696 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Apr 96 pp 1, 4*

[Unattributed report: "Military Opposition Organization Says it Attacked Sudanese Popular Defense Forces Camp"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — A Sudanese military opposition organization announced in a statement yesterday that it had launched an attack on a camp belonging to the Sudanese Popular Defense Forces [SPDF] in east Sudan.

The "Sudanese Alliance Forces," [SAF] led by (retired) Brigadier 'Abd-al-'Aziz Khalid, said that at dawn the day before yesterday a group belonging to it attacked the Mudaysisah [as transliterated] camp, 15 km south of Kassala in east Sudan.

The statement added that the operation "resulted in 15 elements being killed and one wounded from among the (National Islamic) Front. The Alliance's troops returned to their position without any injuries or losses."

The operation, named in the statement as "Operation Martyr Altayah," is the first by the SAF against a camp belonging to the SPDF.

The statement did not specify the location to which the Alliance's troops withdrew. However, the Sudanese Government has accused Eritrea of opening camps for this organization on its territory.

The al-Baja Forces announced recently that they had clashed with units from the Sudanese Defense Forces in an area near the border with Eritrea.

The two operations represent a new escalation in the military operations carried against Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir's government by northern opposition organizations. The SAF organization said in its statement yesterday that Operation Martyr Altayah represents "a step toward an armed people's uprising."

**Sudan: NDA Military Wing Reportedly Attacks, Kills 15 Soldiers**

*AB2204171296 London BBC World Service in English 1505 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The military wing of Sudan's exiled opposition National Democratic Alliance, the NDA, which is based in Cairo, is claiming to have killed 15 government soldiers in an attack on the northeastern border town of Kassala. The Sudan alliance forces said they came out of the raid on Saturday [20 April] with captured equipment as well, and it is believed to be the first major strike by the allied forces. It comes hard on the heels of the new offensive launched by the southern SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] rebels, who recently captured two towns along Sudan's border with Ethiopia. On the line to Khartoum, William Wallis asked our reporter Alfred Taban if there had been any official confirmation of the raid on Kassala.

[Begin recording] [Taban] No, not at all. There has not even been any rumor of it at all! No.

[Wallis] Are these Sudan Alliance Forces well known in the capital, Khartoum?

[Taban] Oh yes, people here know about them. They know that the opposition forces, that is the Ummah Party of al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, the Democratic Unionist Party, and the Communist Party have come together abroad into what is called the National Alliance Forces.

[Wallis] This seems to be an armed faction of these forces?

[Taban] Yes, it is reported to be an armed faction that is based in Eritrea, headed by (Abdul Aziz Halid).

[Wallis] Who is (Abdul Aziz Halid)?

[Taban] (Abdul Aziz Halid) was a colonel in Sudan's Armed Forces until he defected a few years ago. He went and joined the National Democratic Alliance, which was the political platform of the opposition abroad, and apparently because of his military background they chose him to head the National Alliance Forces. It is known that he has been based in Eritrea for some time now.

[Wallis] Now, have the Sudan Alliance Forces been responsible for any confirmed attack to date?

[Taban] No, not yet. There has been a lot of rumors but no confirmed attack as yet.

[Wallis] So if what they say is correct that they have attacked the northeastern town of Kassala, this is a fairly significant development.

[Taban] Oh yes, it is a fairly significant development, and it will be taken very, very seriously here, because Kassala is a major town in eastern Sudan. It is first of all close to the grain producing area of Katiri. Secondly, it is situated between the capital, Khartoum, and the main sea inlet Port Sudan, and it is through Port Sudan that most of the country's imports come and exports go. So, any problem in Kassala would definitely affect the inflow of inputs and the outflow of exports. [end recording]

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**Iraq: Oil-for-Food Talks With UN To Resume 22 Apr**

*JN2204172696 Baghdad INA in Arabic*
*1535 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] New York/United Nations, 22 Apr (INA)—Iraqi and UN delegations will resume at a later hour tonight, Baghdad time, their sessions within the context of the third round of dialogue over the issue of oil in exchange for food, medicine, and other basic needs.

The current round of talks started on 8 April. The two sides agreed to continue the working sessions to discuss and study the points related to the subject.

In the final days of last week, the two delegations held a general review of the paragraphs of the unofficial paper. They agreed to resume the working sessions today to continue discussion.

**Iraq: 22 Apr Session of Oil-for-Food Talks Begins**

*JN2204201096 Baghdad INA in Arabic*
*1930 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 22 Apr (INA)—The delegations of Iraq and the United Nations began a new session this evening, New York time. This session falls within the framework of the dialogue held between the two sides on the issue of exchanging oil for food, medicine, and Iraqi people's basic needs.

**Iraq: UN Envoy on Talks With UN, Egypt, Jordan**

*NC2304055996 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic*
*17 Apr 96 p 9*

[Report by Salah 'Abd-al-'Aziz]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's representative at the United Nations, has said that there are some differences [with the United Nations] over the implementation of Security Council Resolution 986. The differences concern the way food and medicine should be purchased and distributed in the Kurdish region, he said.

He said the purchase of essential material should be a right for the Iraqi Government so that the country's safety and territorial integrity may not be harmed.

He said that a ration-card system for food distribution is being used throughout Iraq and must also be used in the north.

Hamdun stressed that the United Nations cannot distribute such a huge amount of food and other essential supplies. It can do so only if it uses hundreds of employees, which will mean that a large part of the revenues will be allocated for salaries at the expense of the Iraqi citizen, he said.

He said the United States and its allies at the Security Council are trying to deny any role, not only for the Iraqi Government but also for the adopted system in Iraq, in distributing food. The aim is to force Iraq to reject the resolution, he said.

On Iraq's views toward Arab reconciliation, Nizar Hamdun said Iraq started calling for this reconciliation immediately after the war. He said Iraq, on various occasions, expressed its willingness and readiness to restore Arab reconciliation and accord and to work for a better future for the Arabs instead of them remaining hostage to past events.

He expressed regret that some Gulf states rejected this inclination. He said this rejection made the rest of the Arab countries in the Gulf and elsewhere reluctant to find an Arab solution to the existing situation.

He said some Arab countries, notably Egypt, are working to achieve Arab accord and to clear the Arab air. They are doing this not because they like this or that country, he said, but because of the way they view the concept of Arab security and the need to preserve Iraq as an important country in the Arab world. They also seek to achieve the minimum amount of Arab solidarity to face the challenges of the age and developments in the region.

He said it is difficult to determine a time period after which an Arab accord can be achieved. We in Iraq want to see this accord today, and we are sure that other Arab countries, like Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen, Sudan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, are looking forward to seeing a new Arab reconciliation formula, he said. He added: Regrettably, other Arab countries and some foreign countries are not willing to see Arab reconciliation.

He said Iraq on many occasions after the war expressed its readiness to turn a new leaf and start a serious dialogue with the U.S. Administration to discuss points of agreement and points of difference on any regional or international issue. Regrettably, he added, the United States, since the era of President George Bush, has been rejecting the principle of talks or dialogue with Iraq.

On Egyptian-Iraqi relations and what Iraq expects from Egypt as a member of the UN Security Council, Nizar Hamdun said: Egypt is eager to achieve minimum Arab solidarity and unity. Through bilateral contacts and statements by Egyptian officials, foremost among them President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Egypt expressed willingness to remove the embargo against the Iraqi people and voiced its pain over the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of this embargo. He said Egypt is trying through different

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channels, including the Security Council, to achieve this. He added: We know that these are not easy efforts because they are met with a great deal of pressure. We still hope that Egypt will play a positive role in the Security Council concerning Iraq, and there are many encouraging indications in this respect.

Speaking about Egyptian-Iraqi relations, he said that under the conditions of the embargo thrown around Iraq and the isolation some are trying to impose on it, Egyptian-Iraqi relations are constantly progressing. It is believed that the foreseeable future will bring more progress and revival to these relations, he said.

Asked about the Iraqi position on the Kuwaiti POW's, he said that there are no Kuwaiti or other POW's in Iraq. There were POW's when the war was still on. But when the war ended, many POW's, including members of the Kuwaiti ruling family, were handed over to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and other states. Iraq has nothing to gain from keeping POW's, he said, adding that some people disappeared during military operations, just like in any other war. Organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross have their own ways of looking for these missing persons. We are doing our utmost to determine the fate of the persons whose files were given to us by Kuwait.

Touching on the joint defense pact between Turkey and Israel, particularly since some say that it is basically targeted at Iraq and Iran, Hamdun said: I believe that the Turkish measure was unjustified because Turkey is part of a region. When there is a collective regional rejection of such an agreement, this means that Turkey, by doing what it did, did not take into consideration the regional sensitivities involving its Arab neighbors, not only Iraq, but also Syria, Egypt, and all Arab states, in addition to Iran and the Islamic states. This measure does not help regional stability.

Commenting on U.S. reconnaissance sorties taking off from Jordan to southern Iraq, he said that the measure was unjustified and unnecessary. He added: If Jordan has any observations on the embargo on Iraq or on implementing the measures concerning economic regions, this is something else. But allowing military aircraft to take off from the Jordanian territories to undertake such a mission is unwarranted because the air embargo on Iraq was not decided by and has nothing to do with the UN Security Council resolutions. The measure was taken through a tripartite decision adopted by America, France, and Britain. It does not change any commitment to the resolutions of the UN organization.

If we take into account the historic and solid ties between Iraq and Jordan at the governmental and popular levels and the nature of the economic relations between the two countries, we will find that the measure Jordan adopted was unjustified, he said, pointing out that Iraq still views Jordan as a fraternal country.

### Iraq: Murderers of Jordanian Truck Driver Interviewed

*JN2304082196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1555 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Apr (INA) — Iraqi television tonight aired an interview with two criminals who murdered a Jordanian truck driver and two others accompanying him on the main highway in al-Anbar Governorate last month.

The criminals recounted the details of the crime, which were included in a statement issued by the Iraqi Interior Ministry. The statement said that on 24 March, the two criminals, 'Izzat Kurdi Khalaf and his brother, Hamid Kurdi Khalaf, robbed a Jordanian Mercedes truck carrying plate number 50660 and killed its driver Muhammad Khayr Hasan and two other Jordanians who were with him, Muhammad Salih Muhammad and 'Izz-al-Din 'Ubayd Hilal. The truck was carrying a shipment of sugar.

Ten days after the crime was committed, the homicide police in al-Anbar Governorate managed to arrest the murderers who admitted to murder and to stealing some parts of the truck. They buried the truck in the desert and sold the sugar to local merchants.

The Interior Ministry statement said the Iraqi police will continue to be the watchful eye that guards citizens and their property. Criminals will never escape punishment, no matter how hard they try to conceal their crimes. The statement added that policemen will do their best to promote security and stability and hunt down and punish criminals. The policemen also pledged to President Saddam Husayn that they will live up to his expectations and those of the people and honestly perform their duties to promote security on the domestic front.

### Iraq: Saddam Addresses Arab Intellectuals

*JN2204084996 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1910 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[Speech by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn at meeting with Arab writers, intellectuals, and journalists in Baghdad; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Greetings and may God bless all of you. We thank Almighty God for allowing us to meet in Baghdad with our Arab brothers who, God willing, are faithful people from the Arab nation. We also thank God because He dictated that the nation embody sublime values [words indistinct] protect one

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of its experiences in Baghdad, and to keep it as it is, in spite of what it has been subjected to by the one whom you know.

We thank God for honoring our nation with all the great universal messages of faith. These were crowned with the message of Islam, the last of these messages, so that Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon, was the last of the prophets and messengers.

We thank God that the faith in the importance of the nation's resurgence transcends all party affiliation. Faith in the nation's resurgence remains the main incentive in our minds, hearts, and consciences so that the nation may rise to a level that enables it to pursue its mission as a great human model. Throughout history, our nation, which has managed to convey the divine messages, has always adopted a humanistic approach and humanistic conduct.

Arab intellectuals have much to think about. One of the most important issues that preoccupies Arab intellectuals, as is apparent from what you have said, is that it is not only important for us to know and to learn, but also to encourage us to [words indistinct] you did not wish to talk. I was eager to listen to what you had to say, because I believe that man, up to the very last moment in his life and irrespective of the knowledge he has amassed, still needs to learn. It is certain that the best and most important lessons are those he learns from his loyal brothers who believe in the same concepts he champions, like someone who has a very precious item and wants to authenticate all its elements. We are speaking of the human being, who is the most valuable thing after the sublime values wished by God. We continue to be eager to listen to those of you from Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, and other parts — and also from Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, and Yemen, and all the other Arab countries. I feel that I need to listen to you more and more, in terms of your analysis, information, deductions, and viewpoints.

How do you describe the current situation of the Arab nation? Is it a negative description? In other words, do we now view the Arab nation in a negative way? Is the Arab nation weaker or stronger than 20 years ago? I am posing this specific question to myself, and I will answer it.

Let us give examples of the Arab nation in all fields. Are there more intellectuals in this nation or less? The answer is clear. Are there more educated people or less? The answer is also clear.

Are there less doctors or engineers or more? Are there more Arab armies or less than 20, 30, or 40 years ago? If the armies are defeated, will the homeland be vulnerable to invaders' armies or not, as was the case 20 or 30 years ago?

There are other examples. I will not answer all the questions. However, the questions and their answers indicate whether the nation is better or not. This is an important matter so we that we do not maintain the illusion that the nation's situation is now weaker than 20 or 30 years ago.

In other words, I am convinced that the nation is definitely more capable now than 20, 30, or 10 years ago. But how did the description of the Arab nation become so mixed up? This is our nation, and the ones who can best describe its situation are its sons. We believe that we are the sons of this nation.

Why is Israel committing the crimes in Lebanon that the whole world is seeing on its television screens? It has received implicit consent for its crimes against the militant people of Lebanon from many parties of the that met in Sharm al-Shaykh. However, will Israel's crimes not inflict losses on it, as well, in terms of the opinions of other countries and opinions of people throughout the world?

I do not believe anybody would say that the approval of the rulers in the United States and Britain of the Zionist crimes in Lebanon means the approval of all nations in the world or even the British and American people's approval of this. I do not believe this.

There is always a distinction to be made between official acceptance or rejection and popular acceptance or rejection; between acceptance or rejection that represents the will of nations or peoples and between acceptance or rejection that represents the will of the rulers alone. There is always a distinction. This distinction is qualitative.

Israel decided to do what it has done not because the rulers in Lebanon reject Zionist schemes, but because it knows that basically, the people in Lebanon are the ones who reject Zionist schemes. That is why it was forced to commit this heinous act out in the open, not out of a feeling of capability, but out of a feeling of defeat from within. Whatever cover it might produce will be fragile and cannot conceal the faultiness of the aggression and cannot hide the faultiness of those who propagated for the so-called peaceful solutions in this stage and their essence, the so-called policy of normalization. In accordance with the Zionist concept, the policy of normalization means intellectual, economic, and technological invasion since the Zionists failed to invade the Arab nation with its armies.

While I respect our army—we consider every Arab army as ours, as we consider the Iraqi Army the army of all the Arabs—in Lebanon, I would like to know

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if Israel was forced to carry out such actions to spite the Lebanese Army. Would it be difficult for Israel to occupy parts of Lebanon, or all of Lebanon, if it only had to deal with a regular army and not an entire people who resist, who are aware of the importance of resistance, and who cling to the opposite of occupation?

Is this a weakness, compared with our state of affairs 20 or 30 years ago? At present, is it possible for France to reoccupy Algeria, which was under French rule in 1952 or 1954? Is it possible for it to reoccupy Morocco? Is it possible for Italy to reoccupy Libya? Is it possible for Britain to reoccupy Iraq or Egypt? Is it possible for them to do so? They might be able to do so for a few days or for several months. Eventually, they will find themselves confronting a people who will kick them out of one country after another, a people ready to fight and engage in acts of resistance, a people capable of engaging in resistance and combat, who draw strength not from old leaders, but from new leaders who will be introduced by new experiences and events. Such leaders will emerge naturally. Does the appearance of leaders capable of creativity, inventiveness, resistance, and construction outside the classical, traditional, and old framework we knew in Syria, Iraq, Sudan, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Lebanon not tell of a nation undergoing rebirth?

Every 20 years, we hear about this or that leader in Lebanon. This leader remains unchallenged for 20 or 30 years. The same was true in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere in the Arab homeland. The process of creation and renewal is active and ongoing. If old leaders do not live up to the seriousness of events, new leaders will be born in the country to lead the people through the circumstances. When mischief is at its worst, capability is at its best. Because capability has been enriched and elevated in the hearts, minds, and consciences of the Arab nation's sons, mischief has to be at its lowest. That is, it has to reach rock bottom. It is free to do so.

In the past, including the stage when there were two axes, leaders found someone to lean on in the international arena. Thus, they were able to evade the blows. When they crossed, they did so with a guide. When they had to navigate, they did so with a veteran navigator one way or another. Therefore, two types of leaders emerged: those who were close to the West and those whose policies agreed with the general policies of the former Soviet Union. The leaders emerged as part of this stage. But, in general, leaders whose general policies were in line with the USSR's general policy were viewed as nationalists. Leaders whose policies were in agreement with the West or who wanted to be satellites of the West were viewed as leaders who distanced themselves from the people. This was the general description that prevailed in the Arab homeland.

But we cannot say that someone who sails without a veteran navigator to tell him how to navigate and how to face the waves is the same as someone who sails navigates with a veteran navigator to guide him. The one who navigates without a veteran navigator will reach his final destination, but only after dealing with all the surprises the sea and the river have for him. It goes without saying that the marks he gets will be different from the marks the others get, although both are capable.

The leaders who are still alive, whether they are nationalist leaders or followers of the West and whose names, titles, and history are known throughout the Arab homeland, have become irrelevant since the Soviet Union abandoned its role and name, since the United States started to ask for a different type of relations, and since the revival of Zionism, which sees this stage as a golden opportunity.

That is, anyone who agreed with the United States in some areas and disagreed with it in others has suddenly found itself compelled to accept everything or lose the United States' friendship. Whoever counted on the former Soviet Union to help them sail to the other shore found himself without a navigator. They were left with no choice but to drown. Some of them are gone. Others have chosen to align themselves with the United States in the hope that they will have a new opportunity to straighten things out. Others have chosen to demonstrate a certain measure of resistance. And here lies the weakness, and not within the nation's ranks. Consequently, the signs of weakness we are seeing concern the Arab rulers' state of affairs, not that of the Arab nation. The showdown of the Mother of Battles, which was destined by God, came about under these circumstances. This is how we see things. Of course, this does not mean that man's will is powerless. This is not true. This is how we view religious doctrine. Human will is crucial. When a man acts in good faith, God lends a helping hand. God likes powerful believers — that is, believers who harbor great faith and express their faith in powerful ways. God facilitates things for such believers. But if man is powerless and fails to show prowess and engage in struggle and jihad, he will find no help from God Almighty.

Consequently, enlightened will; the expression of the ability to oppose weakness, humiliation, surrender, and capitulation; and the expression of the nation's will, as happened in Iraq, which is part of the Arab nation, are all important because they reflect the nation's determination to express its competence and goals in the

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best possible manner, regardless of the views of others — namely, the enemies who oppose the paths pursued.

The Mother of Battles took place. Given our description of the international situation when the Mother of Battles took place, the Arab citizen found himself facing certain objectives. Even though the Arab citizen did not want these particular objectives, they were the closest to the objectives he was seeking. However, there was a tremendous difference between the familiar objectives and the situation he was seeing.

It was natural for Arabs to begin to assess things locally and embarrass his brothers. We say: May God help them help themselves. In other words, may God help them rise above the earlier level of assessment. May God also help them show the concerned people in any Arab country that they conform to the assessment. If this is not the case, the people will continue to be distanced from their ruler.

The Arab nation has seen new objectives on its television screens. For example, the Arab nation no longer accepts that any Arab country larger than Iraq—or at least any Arab country the same size as Iraq in terms of population, area, and other things—should say: I will yield to the United States because it is stronger than my country.

Iraq did not yield to the United States and the 32 other states. The remarks of the inspection teams on the blockade, on the killing of people due to starvation, on the destruction of a certain plant, and other things do not mean that we have capitulated. Our circumstances are understood.

In any case, we have not relinquished the basic context; namely, the pan-Arab line, pan-Arab thinking, pan-Arab policy, and national policy. In addition, we have not relinquished issuing laws to address development and scientific progress in a way that will serve the homeland, the nation, and Iraq as a basis for the nation. In fact, we are not saying this. They actually said this in their statements this week. They said this in one form or another, and you heard it.

So, brothers, this is what happened. A bipolar world order was in place. Whoever came under pressure from one pole tried to obtain a measure of protection or care from the other pole. Whoever agreed to the general policy of one pole or the other tried to obtain assistance, as well as a measure of protection, from this pole. Some of your Iraqi brothers wished for a state to exercise a veto in their favor. If such a thing had happened, the course of events would not have unfolded as it has. I am saying that God should be praised because we had no power to exercise a veto on our behalf. God should be praised for this. If this had been the case, profound Arab nationalism, which draws its strength from the nation's heritage and seeks inspiration from its renewable historical message, would not have emerged in the hearts and minds of all Arabs as it has. A substantial element would have been lost. The party that used the veto on our behalf would have obtained the greater part of the credit for winning the battle. The smaller part of credit would have been shared by Iraq and its nation, of which you are a part.

The Arab nation's new character, as it has unfolded here, takes credit for the all-out steadfastness, the combat, the endurance under the embargo, the rebuilding, and the new construction drive. Investigations now concern how this part of the nation is showing similarities to other parts. Iraqi mothers have counterparts in Algeria. There are illiterate mothers in Algeria, just as there are illiterate mothers in Iraq. If Morocco or Tunisia still has illiterate mothers or grandmothers, most of our grandmothers are illiterate. Despite all this, illiterate fathers, grandmothers, and mothers, as well as educated mothers and fathers, have all produced scientists. In the past, we urged Jordanian Arabs to produce scientists. They said they cannot. We asked them: Why have the French managed to produce scientists? They answered: Because they are French and because modern technology and science seem to have been tailored for the West. The West sought to implant this idea in the Arab mind. We have urged them to become scientists. They answered: We cannot. When we insisted, they said that they cannot because their mothers are illiterate. We asked them to be scientists and to seek inspiration from Iraq, which has produced scientists, even though Iraqi mothers and fathers were simple, illiterate peasants. Given all this, they must seek inspiration from the nation's heritage. When they do so, God willing, they will be able to produce scientists and great army commanders. They will be able to fight and build.

This does not mean that the nation discovered some of its characteristics in the great battles of liberation the Arabs waged against the armies of occupation in Iraq, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, the Arab Maghreb, and the Arab East. These were liberated. But to gather all these positive elements in one place for a good cause is something new and has never happened before — fighting; construction, reconstruction; siege and reconstruction; siege and resistance. This has never happened before. That is why we say very confidently that this would not have happened if Almighty God had not wanted it to happen. As believers, we should be happy with what has taken place and thank God for it. Life and death are part of God's law. We should not be happy with death, but we should thank God and say: Thanks be to God

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that He gave us patience and the time to remember that death is God's law and we should not forget it.

No one wants to be besieged in order to prove he can resist the siege. No one wants to be sent into battle to prove he can fight. But when this happens, one should thank God for everything he bestows on us. If the devil wants something and God remains silent—God can defeat the devil—then this means that God does not want to protect us from a tribulation in Lebanon , Syria, or Iraq. God does not want to keep the tribulation from us. This means he wants to test us. Therefore, we should thank God for wanting to test us so that he may give us a reward in this world and in the hereafter; a reward in this world that satisfies one's conscience and a reward that we know in the hereafter as a reward to the believers.

Your nation fares well. Do not have any illusions, and do not attribute this weakness to the nation. The gap has become wider, and the rulers now face a difficult test. This is not a testimonial to make things easier for them. It is a testimonial which objectively states that it has become a difficult test for the Arab rulers because no preparations were made for this stage. Many of these rulers were preparing themselves for the previous stage. Suddenly, they found themselves facing a new stage and more pressure. This is so because they did not make the necessary preparations to become leaders to assume what they should assume. The faith of some of them was also not as deep-rooted as it should have been to allow them to deal with the new developments and transformations.

This does not mean that we should call on all to rise to the highest possible level we aspire to attain. We are part of life, and call on all to succeed. One gets 51, others [pauses]. But, we do not want anyone to get 49. This means we do not wish any of our brother Arab leaders to get 49, 20, or less. We wish success to all of them, God willing, and to have success marks higher than the ones we have, if we are within those who succeeded. When we say God willing, this does not mean that we should halt our efforts to obtain higher grades. We ask God to enable our brothers to get higher marks and to progress so that one would get 70, another 60, a third 65, and a fourth 51. Well, an average of 50 and above is good. We do not want them to disappoint us by getting 10, five or zero. We do not wish them this. We wish success to all of them, without any exception. If all succeed, it will be a happiness that I cannot now describe. We wish them success.

Your country Iraq cannot... [pauses] now is the time for prayer. Iraq does not have the technical ability to deliver the message it wishes to be delivered to the Arab audience, or even to the foreign audience. I do not think it would have the same technical ability as that of the major powers. [addressing 'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd-al-Ghafur, the Iraqi culture and information minister] I believe you have a certain effort underway in the field of satellite transmission? We are seeking to achieve that.

However, the message which you talked about in Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon, and everywhere arrived, not only in technical terms. The Arab citizen responded to this message with his conscience, and not only with his artistic or media feelings. This message arrived because the Arab citizen is yearning for a genuine, pure, and sincere expression of the message of the nation, and this is the meaning of faithful pan-Arabism. I am talking about the message of the nation. The nation has a message, which is not the creation of the present, but which has deep roots in the past.

If this message is not a faithful one, it will be materialistic. If it has no faith in all that is inherited, then it will be outside the framework of Arab civilization. If this message is not a faithful one, it will not be able to mobilize the nation's conscience and mind for the sake of its present and future. If it has faith only in the utopian sense of the word, without taking the present into consideration, it will not attract all the sons of the nation. All the sons of the nation must participate, not only some of them. The nation's message is too big to be carried by only some of its sons. All the sons of the nation should do so except those who do not want to do so. All the sons of the nation should contribute to the nation's message to enable it to make a breakthrough and come up with a human example which is in harmony with its great message.

Therefore, we do not adopt a neutral stand between faith and atheism. No, neutralism here is rejected, for faith is clear and atheism is clear, and the boundaries of faith are clear and the boundaries of atheism are clear. This is how we look at it.

Our nation's past is a genuine part of our memory. One should not think that the nation would relinquish this past and lose its roots—No. At the same time, this past represents the depth of our religion and its inspirations, and I do not mean the inherited interpretations in this regard which represent a way of life at a certain stage.

We examine even the experience of the Muslim leaders who ruled in Baghdad, Bilad al-Sham, Egypt, or the Arab Maghreb, not to imitate them, but to be inspired by them as they are part of the nation's personality. The enemies of the nation underestimate Iraq's capabilities. They said that Iraq would collapse within weeks after the aggression. They might have believed it because the

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general calculations stored in their computers are based on concepts that differ from those we are talking about.

They have certain concepts of the ruler and the ruled, the technical equipment, and the armed forces. The relationship between the ruler and the ruled in their countries and the relationship between the commander in chief, the head of state, and the army commander also have their own criteria. They demonstrated these relationships during World War I and World War II and in other parts of the world. They saw them collapsing under certain circumstances and coming into existence under other circumstances. Therefore, they began adopting these criteria on economics and on what would happen if the people faced a shortage in a certain area.

So, they gave us a week. They took matters out of their context when they said that Iraq would bow and collapse in one week. But they were compelled after the first week to extend the period of time, as their books and memoirs admit. Why? Is it because of the technical capability of their [Iraqi people] leaders, is it because what the Iraqis and the Arabs call the head of state in Iraq, or is it because of his technical capability, or because he is more versed in military or popular mobilization than others? Is the question a technical one? No, they made a mistake when they believed it to be a technical one and when they interpreted it in accordance with what is inherited and stored in their computers.

The issue is bigger than this. The issue now is that the Iraqis, if not all of them — meaning the decisionmakers at all levels — understand that any sacrifice they have offered is not a sacrifice to only maintain Iraq — in regard to being patriotic, in the general sense — but is a sacrifice, in which the blood of the martyr waters a flower in Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and everywhere. The Iraqis consider the blood of the Algerian martyr just like their blood. God's fate may be to have four Iraqi martyrs instead of one from Iraq, one from Algeria, one from Tunisia, and so forth. This is it. All countries of this nation — this fragmented nation — cannot witness a resurgence and reach the same level at once. This is not possible. There must be a stage in which the nation would face hardships and carry the honor.

Is it not an honor that all of you are looking at your Iraqi brothers as people who have presented to sublime meanings what is worthy of your praise? You came from your countries to Iraq at your own expense. Some of you probably do not have enough to pay for daily meals — as the popular proverb says — and despite this, you paid for your ticket and perhaps encountered difficulties on the way to Baghdad to take part in an intellectual symposium to discuss the role of the Arab intellectual in the nation's struggle and how it should be more active in light of a speech Saddam Husayn delivered on the occasion of the Mother of Battles. Is this not part of the price paid in life for the Iraqi Arabs? In other words, the feeling toward their brothers in the forward trench is like a fighter's feeling during war. The feeling is that the people in the forward trench deserve good food to be sent to them. They are the ones who face the bulk of the bomb attacks. Is it not a way of expressing these meanings when an Arab from Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt speaks? Just like the Arab spoke about the Algerian revolution as if it were taking place in Baghdad. The Algerian revolution took place in Algeria. However, at the time, we, over here, were students facing the bullets of Nuri Sa'id's police and the former monarchy with our chests, carrying only our books. We demanded a stronger stand in Algeria's interest.

When blood was shed in Port Said, we here, as students at that time, took to the streets with our books in our hands facing bullets with our bare chests to champion the stand of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, may his soul rest in peace, and the militant people of Egypt. Was this not an expression that the nation is one nation? All [Arab] rulers today say that this is one nation. Is this not a development? In the past, they did not say this, isn't this true? In the past, when a ruler in Iraq mentioned the word nation he meant Iraq, the nation of Iraq; and when a ruler in Lebanon mentioned the word nation he meant the Lebanese nation. Today, no Arab ruler means a single state by the word nation, but they mean the Arab nation. Although some of them do not say it from the depth of their heart, they are forced to say it. Is this not a change from the situation which prevailed 20 or 30 years ago, although it is a limited change. Your nation is in good shape. What is required, however, is that we, as rulers, should be in good shape. In other words, we must be honest to the nation and to our people and to deeply feel that there can be no honest patriotism without a sincere feeling of pan-Arabism. Regarding the methods to achieve this, the wise men of the nation are the ones who will say how. It all depends on the circumstances. Algeria is Algeria and Iraq is Iraq, but all of them should believe that they need to be one nation in terms of essence and even form. This does not mean that they have to cancel their entities, but to recognize the most comprehensive name and its great meanings. We have not invented this, but it is part of our history. Islam demonstrated these meanings in the best way in terms of the ruling systems which prevailed then. Bilad al-Sham, Iraq, Algeria, and Egypt continued to be called so in the era of the Islamic state. When the main pillars of a large tent are demolished small entities

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will emerge. The process of tearing up a big tent means giving the foreigners access to your doorstep. A single state's potentials cannot alone resist a foreigner. If you say that Iraq resisted by itself I will say that Iraq resisted not by its own potentials but by its faithful, pan-Arab spirit.

Had Iraq not been a nationalist and a believer, it would not have been able to resist, and its national capabilities would not have been equal in terms of steadfastness to the capabilities which were, and still are, placed against it.

This is the factor the U.S. computers did not calculate. They did not calculate Iraq's area, they calculated its population of 20 million — excluding those who have placed their will under difficult conditions in northern Iraq. However, they did not take into account the fact that the depth of each person in Iraq extends throughout the Arab homeland and to all the sons of the Arab nation from East to West. They did not take this into account.

They thought that the Iraqis' roots and potentials are confined to the present while these roots go back to thousands of years in the very heart of the Arab nation and Iraq. Whenever the capabilities of the present fall short, the Iraqis seek strength from the past in the confrontation, resistance, innovation, and steadfastness.

One of the brothers said that the problem does not lie in the masses but in the intellectuals. I, however, say that the negative description applies to governments, not to the masses. Everyone works according to their capabilities. Iraq does what it can, while others do their share. We always cite Iraq as an example so that as few people as possible will be angry. In other words, this is the way we are. Even if you are very satisfied with us, we still say no, there is always room for improvement so that the people will not be content with the situation in which they are and so that they will continue work for a better situation.

How can the Arab intellectuals contribute with their activities? They do so by being part of what is good. In brief, what we are required to do at the moment is to publicly declare our belief and to further entrench the individual characteristics, both at the same time. We must reinforce the individual roles without narrowing the bridge that links the sons of the Arab nation. If someone seeks to become faster let us bless him and appreciate his efforts. If someone wants to become faster let him do so and we must not be angry at this. However, at the same time, we have to build a common bridge. Regardless of our titles and names, we should all feel that we are part of this bridge, it belongs to all of us, and it is essential for all of us to cross to the other shore.

The speech on which you have based part of your activity is not the first speech. If you go back to other speeches, some of which are improvised and others are written, you will find that they contain this concept in general. However, in this speech, this concept was more comprehensive than in any other speeches, because I had a strong feeling that it would be useful, and that we should expand the road to the crossing, not to narrow it. This means that we should establish additional bridges without narrowing this road. I mean other bridges without having this be at the expense of the efforts to build the major bridge. I recommend that we should not build narrow bridges on which there is not enough room for the entire nation, but we should expand the crossing bridge. As we see, the most important issue which encourages us to contribute to expanding the crossing bridge is the faithful pan-Arabism to which we should give its true meaning.

We should not say words only, but we should have faith, because words are an expression of the faith in one's heart and mind. I might not have covered everything in your mind. I wish that we had more time to speak more. However, the most important thing is that I met with you and saw that you are alright. God willing, all Arab countries will be in a good shape, and Arab unity will be achieved. Unity exists in the Arabs' conscience, history, and heritage. We hope that it will be achieved during your time to express the Arabs' will, maturity, and awareness at any future stage, God willing. Greetings to all.

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**Israel: No Accord Reached in 1st Round of Peres-Christopher Talks**

*TA2304093496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting between Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is due resume at the prime minister's bureau at present after an hour's break to permit Mr. Peres to participate in a Remembrance Day service on Mount Herzl.

Both Peres and Christopher said that there is still no cease-fire agreement but that the negotiations are continuing. The prime minister said that time is not pressing and that Israel aspires to achieve better understandings than those reached in 1993. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Secretary Christopher brought with him from Damascus a written document containing a U.S. proposal, but neither of the men said anything about President al-Asad's position. The U.S. secretary plans to leave for Damascus today, and he might return to Jerusalem to continue the contacts.

[Begin Peres recording] We are in the midst of contacts to end the exchange of fire between northern Israel and south Lebanon. The negotiations have not been concluded. We want them to end in a serious, acceptable agreement that allows civilian life on both sides to return to normal. I thank the secretary for his supreme effort. He is expending unlimited time and effort to bridge the positions of both sides. This morning, we heard some of the ideas raised in Damascus, and we made some points. The negotiations will continue. The supreme aim is not just to save time but to reach an understanding that will pass the test of time. [end recording]

**Israel: Peres Orders IDF To Resume Full-Scale Operation**

*TA2304081796 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 23 Apr 96 pp 1, 10*

[Report by Ya'el Gewirtz, Alex Fishman, and Shim'on Schiffer]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Yesterday, under orders from the prime minister and defense minister, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] went back to the original plan for Operation Grapes of Wrath, after three days in which it had scaled down its activities in the wake of the tragedy in Qana.

Several hours after the scope of the killing in Qana on 18 April became known and under orders from Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister, the IDF significantly reduced its aerial activities and artillery fire in south Lebanon.

The deviation from the operation plan caused significant unrest among Northern Command officers. On 21 April, Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq, chief of staff, summoned top Northern Command brass and admonished them for remarks attributed to them in the media according to which the officers criticized the decision to lower the profile of the operation. [passage omitted]

Political sources estimated last night that Israel and Syria are close to drafting new understandings. This assessment is based on the assumption that the Syrian president cannot send U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher back empty-handed. There were no contacts between the U.S. team in Damascus and the Israeli decisionmakers yesterday.

The document of understandings that will be agreed on will be a U.S. paper. It will contain several clauses, each beginning with the words: "The United States understands that...." For example: "The United States understands that the parties will observe a cease-fire; the United States understands that the parties will not carry out operations against civilians," and so on. The paper of understandings will not be signed but will be based on the assumption that Israel and Syria will give the United States "their word of honor" to observe the principles on which the cease-fire rests.

The sources believe the Americans are very close to concluding the new understandings. Christopher will leave the area only after a cease-fire is declared on all fronts. Once the cease-fire is secured and as part of the U.S. efforts, Christopher will announce that political negotiations between Israel and Syria will resume. [passage omitted]

**Israel: Deputy Minister Or—Firing To Continue Until Katyushas Stop**

*TA2204151196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or says whoever thought it was possible to stop the firing of katyushas was totally wrong. Or says through Operation Grapes of Wrath the government wanted to convey to the Lebanese Government that it would have to pay a price. If there is no agreement and Israel comes under fire she will fire back. Or spoke to reporters on a tour of Joseph's Tomb in Nabulus and the Elon More settlement in Samaria today.

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**Israel: IDF Spokesman Denies Amal Claim on Downing Helicopter**

*TA2304044196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Amal organization in southern Lebanon claims it struck an Israeli Air Force Apache helicopter as it flew east of Tyre last night. The report was carried by the French news agency AFP. However, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman denies the report and says Amal is basing its claim on the Israeli statement last night that an Apache helicopter was forced to make an emergency landing at a base in northern Israel. The spokesman says a technical problem was discovered during an attack in southern Lebanon.

**Israel: Jordanian Envoy Notes Negative Impact of Operation on Ties**

*TA2304103496 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Apr 96 p A3*

[Report on interview with Jordanian Ambassador to Israel 'Umar al-Rifa'i by Gay Bekhor on 22 April; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] "The most important thing now is to achieve an immediate cease-fire. Israel must unilaterally announce a cease-fire and a cessation of acts of war," 'Umar al-Rifa'i, Jordan's new ambassador to Israel, said in an interview with HA'ARETZ yesterday.

He said that "a continuation of the attacks and counter-attacks or the violence and counterviolence only harm the entire atmosphere in the region and create a black future. Jordan is very concerned about what is happening in Lebanon because of the scenes on television, the continuation of the violence, and the killing of innocent people." Amb. al-Rifa'i described how the Jordanian and Arab publics are influenced by the terrible pictures of the Lebanese population and especially the killing in Qana, shown on television.

The ambassador said that "the opponents of a peace accord with Israel in Jordan are a minority, but the shocking films on television provide the opponents of peace with growing public support. Israel's image is being harmed. The Jordanian Government finds it hard to confront that phenomenon, as we have explained that the future lies in peace and that it will be a positive future but, following the escalation in Lebanon, it is hard to continue to explain that logic."

"The examples we have of the benefits that peace will bring are few. The people in Jordan are very concerned about the closure on the territories and especially the suffering in Lebanon, as seen on television. People are always influenced by the media, both electronic and written, and when they see pictures of small children being wounded, it makes them respond. That is true not only with regard to Lebanon or the Palestinians. The Jordanians do not like such sights."

In response to a question on whether King Husayn finds it hard to defend the peace with Israel and the peace process in view of the Israeli activity in Lebanon, al-Rifa'i said: "His Highness and all the supporters of peace defend the peace process, but when we point to the benefits of peace, we cannot point to a military situation."

Asked whether Jordan understands the Israeli security concerns that led to the latest escalation in Lebanon, the ambassador replied: "Jordan fully understands the security concerns and the unbearable situation that existed in northern Israel, which was under katyusha shelling. On the other hand, however, Jordan does not understand a situation in which innocent civilians are shelled. The ongoing injury to Lebanese civilians hurts Israel's image in the Arab world and is very unfavorable to peace."

The Jordanians will apparently keep a low profile in bilateral events with Israel. The opening of the border crossing to private vehicles on 28 April was meant to be an important event, but because of the fighting in Lebanon, the ceremonies will be much more low-key.

**Israel: France's de Charette Lauds French Role, Denies Anti-Israel Stance**

*TA2304090696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Apr p 96 p A2*

[Interview with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette by Aluf Ben in Jerusalem on 22 April]

[FBIS Translated Text] "In the current crisis, France wanted to make a contribution toward peace from the outset, and we were the first to intervene. When I arrived in the region last week, the discussions here were only about the fighting, and I was the first to propose a cease-fire. Over several days, I formed the impression that the sides were engaged in a dialogue of the deaf. I am happy that there is now an awareness that the key question is when a cease-fire will be secured. We could have prevented this situation," French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said in an interview with HA'ARETZ upon leaving Israel for Damascus yesterday.

De Charette complained about the criticism leveled in Israel against France's involvement in the mediation efforts in Lebanon. He said: "We have the impression that Israel has doubts about the French contribution, and some of the public believes that we have raised bad

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proposals which are not sympathetic toward Israel. That makes me very sad."

[Ben] There is an impression that France has reverted to what President Chirac called "an Arabist policy" and is ignoring the changes taking place in the region. Why haven't you shown a more balanced policy?

[De Charette] That charge is unfair. France is a friend of Israel and has demonstrated this on many occasions. Immediately upon my arrival in the region, I stressed that the right of the residents of northern Israel to live in security is a key issue. The Israelis understand that and can also understand that France has been linked to Lebanon for many, many years. Our ties with Lebanon run very deep. One can maintain a friendship with two friends, even when they are in conflict. We will not sacrifice one friendship for the sake of the other.

You must go to Lebanon and see the insufferable tragedy the crisis has caused there. Eight days ago, I left at the personal instruction of the French president to find ways to end the crisis in a way that guarantees security for Israel and, at the same time, permits the Lebanese families to return to their towns and villages and live there in security. [end de Charette]

De Charette said that France can play a significant role in achieving a settlement because of its special status. "If Israel believes that is the target, it will also become its aim. I said as much at length to Shim'on Peres, and I think I succeeded in starting to convince him."

According to the French minister, "we are trying to reach a cease fire between the parties involved — Israel, Lebanon, and Syria, which has great influence — as well as the United States, whose profound responsibility over many years I recognize."

[Ben] What impression of the Syrian position did you get in your talks with President al-Asad?

[De Charette] Al-Asad referred to one issue that has not been resolved: How to prevent future attacks on Israeli soldiers from katyushas deployed in the towns and villages. That is one of the issues currently been discussed. [end de Charette]

De Charette said "there must be a guarantee that any incident or violation of the agreement does not lead to a violent escalation as we have witnessed in recent weeks. To that end, France proposed setting up a security council to consider complaints about each violation of the agreement."

[Ben] How will the quiet in Lebanon be guaranteed in the long term?

[De Charette] The next aim, which must be achieved within a reasonable period, is to bring about a comprehensive solution of the problem — in other words, to try to achieve an Israeli army withdrawal from south Lebanon. On the other hand, the armed militias in Lebanon must be disarmed and security guaranteed on both sides of the Israel-Lebanon border. That is the aim toward which we are working, and France has clarified its readiness to contribute to that within the framework of an international force.

[Ben] The prime minister proposed an Israeli withdrawal from the security zone if suitable security arrangements are worked out.

[De Charette] That is possible if there is an Israeli withdrawal, and France will be able to make an important contribution to achieving a settlement that will appear honorable to both Lebanon and Israel.

[Ben] Al-Asad opposes the arrangement proposed by Israel.

[De Charette] That is not the question. The peace mechanism must include Lebanon, Syria, and Israel. In my view, that is possible. We will not continue the existing situation for another 20 years. We must advance.

[Ben] You also met with the Iranian foreign minister in Damascus. What did you discuss?

[De Charette] Your question shows that the critical dialogue with Iran can be beneficial at certain times. The Iranians have an influence on some of the militias; therefore, I applied heavy pressure on Velayati to contribute to the peace efforts. From our position, we will be able to judge the outcome quickly.

### Israel: Ambassador to France Defends French Mediation Efforts

*TA2304094396 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Apr 96 p A2*

["Exclusive" report by Nitzan Horowitz]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Paris — Israel Ambassador in Paris Avi Pazner told HA'ARETZ that France is coordinating its mediation efforts in Lebanon with the United States at Israel's request.

Amb. Pazner stressed that France has deep and traditional ties with Lebanon and that President Jacques Chirac considers French activity in that state very important. Against that background, the French activity to settle the crisis could help Israel, Pazner said. Nevertheless, he stressed that Israel has made it clear to the French that it is conducting its political contacts through the United States and that France, if it wants any involvement, must coordinate with the Americans.

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"We have no reason to assail the French, and we must be careful not to attack them," the ambassador said. "Up to now, they have been balanced. Even after the terrible incident in Qana, they issued statements that were quite moderate and balanced from Israel's point of view."

According to Pazner, France is interested in returning to the Middle East and renewing its influence here, but it does not have an anti-Israeli policy and its ties with Israel are good and deep. In response to a question about whether France has not legitimized Iran by its latest contacts, Pazner said that Foreign Minister Herve de Charette did hold talks with his Iranian counterpart Velayati in Damascus but that this is not new, as France has been holding contacts with Iran within the framework of what it calls "the critical dialogue." [passage omitted]

**Israel: Air Force Chief Confirms Political Goals of Operation**

*TA2304093196 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT ('ATZMA'UT supplement) in Hebrew 23 Apr 96 pp 2, 4*

[Interview with Major General Herzl Budinger, Israel Air Force commander, by Ya'el Gewirtz and Alex Fishman, in Tel Aviv; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [YEDI'OT] Former Air Force Commander Beni Peled claims that the Air Force was used in Operation Grapes of Wrath as a policing force. The katyushas have not stopped falling, and it seems as though Israel used weapons belonging to the 21st century to pursue Hizballah.

[Budinger] I reject this charge. The Air Force was chosen as the main tool because of the desire to avoid casualties on both sides, and I believe that, from this point of view, it was used correctly. The main goal assigned to us was not Hizballah but rather to bring the political sides involved in the issue to the negotiating table and to reduce the katyusha attacks. Our main target was attacks on Hizballah installations and Lebanese Government infrastructures. Only the Air Force could totally destroy such infrastructures without causing unnecessary civilian casualties.

[YEDI'OT] Can the Air Force achieve these goals without the help of ground forces?

[Budinger] I believe it can do so easily. I believe we were close to achieving these goals were it not for the tragic mishap resulting from the artillery attack on Qana.

[YEDI'OT] So what we saw was meticulous planning and an impressive performance, and then suddenly the surgical operation came to an end. Did one mishap on the ground cause everything to fail?

[Budinger] We knew all along that one of the things that could turn the operation from a great success to a failure would be civilian casualties. An incident such as that in Qana or a repeat of such incidents may cause the operation to fail, and this will be extremely regrettable. [passage omitted]

[YEDI'OT] What is your position regarding the Arrow and the Homa project? Do you believe they will provide us with antimissile protection?

[Budinger] The Homa project was initiated by the government rather than the army. I doubt whether the army would have initiated such a project, just as the army was not the party that decided to distribute gas masks to the entire Israeli population at a cost of 1 billion shekels. The government decided on this project in a bid to give the population maximal protection in case the country comes under a surface-to-surface missile attack. It is entitled to do so, even if this is opposed to the army's opinion.

[YEDI'OT] You do not sound enthusiastic, to say the least.

[Budinger] Only when the development stage is completed and the first battery is deployed will it be possible to examine its effectiveness. At that time, it may transpire that the project is a great failure due to technical complications. I believe that even if this system proves successful, it will not be able to give foolproof protection, and an effective use of it will be extremely expensive. [passage omitted]

[YEDI'OT] It has recently been reported that Israel is interested in the J-Stars reconnaissance plane as a substitute for early warning ground stations on the Golan Heights.

[Budinger] J-Stars is a plane that can detect the deployment of ground forces. It is effective only as a tool for controlling and supervising movement on the ground under conditions of war. I believe that anyone who speaks about it as a plane for providing deterrence is making a big mistake. [passage omitted]

**Israel: Peres on Lebanon Operation, U.S. Support**

*TA2304110396 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 23 Apr 96 p 3*

["Special Independence Day" interview with Shim'on Peres, Israeli prime minister and defense minister, by

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Ya'aqov Erez, Ben Kaspit, and Hemi Shalev on 22 April; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Peres] When you dispatch a unit and it comes under fire, you cannot tell the soldiers not to defend themselves. I bear full responsibility for what took place in the village of Qana. No one else is to blame. This was our unit. It acted with authorization from me, and its mission was to prevent the firing of katyushas at Israel. That is why it was there in the first place. We had feared that Hizballah men might position themselves near UN posts. Two days before the event, our liaison officer sent a letter to the UN forces there warning about this, specifically mentioning the post where this thing happened.

On the day of the incident, our unit came under very heavy mortar and katyusha fire. Our soldiers felt they were in trouble. At a certain point, they thought they had sustained casualties and decided to return the fire. It is known that when shooting starts, UN soldiers take to the shelters. Our soldiers had no idea that hundreds of refugees were there. This is clear. It is also clear that six of our shells overshot their mark and caused the damage.

I asked myself two questions: You dispatch a unit to prevent the firing of katyushas. Does it have the right to defend themselves at its own discretion? What is the scope of its discretion? That brings us to the crucial point: They were not aware of the presence of civilians there, and there was no doubt that Hizballah was firing at them from that spot. There is no doubt about that.

Unfortunately, when a war is going on, you cannot give an order not to kill and not to get killed. This is impossible. Therefore, I cannot say that our boys were reckless. This was an act of self-defense. I can state that they were not aiming at civilians, because they did not know that civilians were there. We must be fair, which is why I do not blame anyone. You will not hear a word of criticism from me. I assume full responsibility for this.

[MA'ARIV] Are you somewhat disappointed with the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] performance?

[Peres] No. Fighting guerrillas is like drinking soup with a fork. The army is not some subcontractor. If you have an isolated unit in the field and the enemy is attacking it, you cannot tell the men: Listen, I sent you out there on condition that you are not attacked and, if you are, you may not defend yourself. The worst thing that can happen is for us to begin to exchange accusations. It is bad for national morale, and it is wrong.

[MA'ARIV] How do you view the upcoming political moves?

[Peres] I believe we are close to reaching understandings and a cease-fire. I don't know exactly how long this will take. We will hear Christopher out, and then we will know. I believe all the parties want a cease-fire. We are not negotiating on whether to introduce a cease-fire but on its nature. Naturally, each party wants to come out with the best achievement possible.

[MA'ARIV] In the meantime, Hizballah is firing katyushas.

[Peres] This is war. I am happy to say, however, that they hit nothing. It is very unpleasant; however, they are firing at shelters, not at specific targets.

[MA'ARIV] How did the Qana incident affect the operation, its goals, and our breathing space?

[Peres] First of all, it affected the rare international support the operation enjoyed when it started. Objectively, it cut the operation short. Everyone realized that even when you launch such a limited operation, serious situations may occur. I took this possibility into consideration, which is why I did everything I could to keep the operation short, knowing that the longer it takes, the greater the chance of encountering such a blunder.

[MA'ARIV] We understand that, in view of the incident, the time element has become more critical.

[Peres] The time element should be kept in proportion to the content of the operation. I would not like to sacrifice content for time. I would not like to give up on major goals because we ran out of time.

[MA'ARIV] Did the incident change anything in the goals of the operation as you see them?

[Peres] When you launch a military operation, you must have a broad strategic vision. Clearly, the incident hurt our international image, but we cannot look at things only from their tactical aspect. I am not saying it is simple; it is not simple at all. At the same time, I will never say that our boys killed civilians capriciously. They went to war; they were not bloodthirsty.

[MA'ARIV] Have you spoken with President Clinton recently?

[Peres] Yes, I spoke with him yesterday. He was wonderful, wonderful. He expressed his support and his understanding of what had happened. I told him that the things that are going on are part of the election campaign — not my campaign but that which is being waged against me. They [not further specified] want to overthrow us. He was very positive.

[MA'ARIV] Don't you feel U.S. pressure recently?

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[Peres] The only U.S. pressure is for the United States to succeed. For example, I have no problem with Christopher's understanding of the Qana incident. He served with the Marines and, like any military man, he knows such things can happen.

[MA'ARIV] Was the military reason for Operation Grapes of Wrath an attempt to harm Hizballah or to create new political conditions?

[Peres] The logic was simple: We had no choice. As simple as that. What else could we do? Besides, there is no contradiction between hurting Hizballah and creating new political conditions.

[MA'ARIV] It seems, however, that Hizballah was not harmed.

[Peres] I disagree. They were hurt, but they are hiding it. They suffered much more than they are showing. It is true that they are showing no signs of collapse, but this is because they are not responsible for a state. They couldn't care less. Two guys come, put a metal triangle in place, fire a katyusha or two, and walk away.

[MA'ARIV] Do you see an option of resuming negotiations with the Syrians before our elections?

[Peres] There may be a meeting with the Syrians. Why not? We are not at odds. It would be a formal meeting. I do not believe there will be real negotiations before the elections.

[MA'ARIV] What are the chances of attaining an interim arrangement or a temporary cease-fire with Lebanon until understandings are reached?

[Peres] Al-Asad rejected the option of an interim arrangement. We were not enthusiastic about a temporary cease-fire. What could we tell the residents of Qiryat Shemona, who would ask us whether they may return home in the meantime?

[MA'ARIV] It is claimed that we chose the easy adversary — Lebanon — and have avoided taking on our main enemies: Syria and Iran. What do you say to that? In yesterday's cabinet session, Minister Efrayim Sne demanded that we increase the pressure on Syria.

[Peres] Syria is willing to negotiate with us; Iran is not. Iran is trying real hard to break the peace process and remove Labor from power in Israel. There are no demonstrations in Syria like those in Iran that call for the annihilation of Israel.

[MA'ARIV] Why is al-Asad seeking an arrangement with us?

[Peres] He does not want Syria to be considered a terror-supporting country any longer. He fears things in Lebanon may get out of hand. He is committed to the Lebanese.

[MA'ARIV] Did the Americans promise him that Syria will be removed from the list of terror-supporting countries after attaining understandings with us?

[Peres] I do not think there is an agreement; there is an understanding. This is his assumption.

[MA'ARIV] He seems indifferent, letting Christopher wait as if he has time.

[Peres] He is pretending. Don't let this impress you.

[MA'ARIV] Is he really such a great negotiator? How does it feel playing poker with him?

[Peres] Yes, he is good. I try to see his good points as well as his weaknesses. Please note that I have never said a bad word about him in any of our confrontations. This is no accident. I hardly mentioned Syria in my Knesset address today. I see no reason for me to make heated remarks. I have my own strategy. Everything that has happened so far was an attempt to destroy the peace process. I do not want this. It may have worked with the Israeli Arabs but not with me.

[MA'ARIV] How do you view the harsh domestic criticism of the operation?

[Peres] Those who urged patience before are losing it now. I will not expand the goals only to expand the fighting. We did not set goals for this operation; rather, we decided what our goals are not. We do not intend to expand the security zone. We do not want to conquer Lebanon or to harm Syria or the negotiations with Syria. We do want a reasonable, bilateral cease-fire. We are experiencing bad international public opinion, but we know how to get over it.

[MA'ARIV] Do you have a message for the residents of Qiryat Shemona who are living outside their town at the moment?

[Peres] I am proud of their endurance and ask them to have a little more patience. We will not compromise on their needs. As for the economic aspect, the government considers Qiryat Shemona a special place and will take the appropriate steps.

[MA'ARIV] How do you view the reaction of the Israeli Arabs?

[Peres] I do not understand their allegations. What do they mean by "child-killers?" Was this intentional? Did anyone want this to happen? What is their answer to the katyushas? What do they suggest? What is their answer to the suicide bombers in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv? We are waging a war for peace. If Hamas [Islamic

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Resistance Movement] wins, it will mean the end of peace.

[MA'ARIV] Do we have reason to believe that 'Arafat is taking counterterror measures these days?

[Peres] Yes. A few days ago, he stopped a squad of five terrorists who were on their way to Israel. He seized explosives and weapons. He arrests people. He is making an effort.

[MA'ARIV] Is amending the Palestinian Charter a precondition for the IDF pullout from Hebron?

[Peres] I do not issue preconditions or ultimatums. I follow the situation on the ground. We will consider the move when we get to it. The weather changes every day.

**Israel: Netanyahu Addresses Knesset on Lebanon**

*TA2204142796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0751 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Political statement by Israel's Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu at an extraordinary session of the Knesset on Operation Grapes of Wrath—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Honorable President of the State, Mr. Speaker, Honorable Knesset: In a few hours, we will mark the Day of Remembrance for the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] fallen. The entire Israeli nation will be like a single bereaved family that cherishes the memory of its dear ones who paid the highest price — the price of their lives — so that the rest of us can live. There is no cure for the intense feeling of pain experienced by the bereaved families, nor is there consolation for their deep agony. Nonetheless, it is exactly on this day that we should remember that it is thanks to the fallen that the State of Israel was founded, built, and strengthened. It is the heroic dedication of our soldiers that tipped the scales in the military campaigns, scored the victory over our enemies, and brought the Arab states to the table to negotiate peace with Israel.

Mr. Speaker, this Day of Remembrance is accompanied by the thunder of artillery on the northern border. After a long period in which the Hizballah terrorists hit our civilians and soldiers in the north, the government finally decided to take action. The roots of the current situation lie in the agreement of understandings reached at the conclusion of Operation Accountability. Those were odd and useless understandings which meant one thing only: They meant that while Hizballah could not fire on our settlements and we could not fire on Hizballah centers inside Lebanese villages, Hizballah was actually allowed to act against our soldiers. Hizballah did indeed do so, because these understandings — by their very nature and not by any violation of them — allowed for incessant, heightened attacks against IDF soldiers on the Lebanese border. And indeed, such attacks were perpetrated on the roads, along the roadsides, at posts, and, with ever-growing audacity, they also approached — and even touched — the border fence with battalion-like formations, booby-trapped cars, and various other measures, escalating the situation in a manner unparalleled in years. These understandings first led to an escalated assault on IDF soldiers in southern Lebanon, and it was only a question of time, after paying the price of over 60 dead soldiers in Lebanon since Operation Accountability, that this assault would also cross the border fence. And indeed, Hizballah, which understood the meaning of these understandings, crossed the fence and began to shell our settlements — not a few days or weeks but many months ago. That shelling was also met by a policy of restraint and quiet with an eye to remaining within the boundaries of those so-called understandings.

I must say I never understood the restraint. Somebody might have had faith that al-Asad, out of kindness, would curb Hizballah — possibly within the framework of the concept of the nonexistent new Middle East — just as we had hoped that 'Arafat would stem terror. We continue to hear this belief today, even when [former] Shin Bet head Karmi Gilon has explained to us that 'Arafat is not taking action or curbing the terrorists. Today, too, these same people continue with the same concept.... [heckling by Labor's Hagay Merom, who tells Netanyahu that in his policy proposal yesterday, Netanyahu in fact accepted the peace process and joined Peace Now]

The government continued with the same conception, and Hizballah interpreted that restraint as weakness, resulting in more katyushas, in a rain of katyushas on the northern settlements. [inaudible hecklings by Minister Ramon and others] Mr. Speaker, I find myself in an interesting situation when cabinet ministers turn into backbenchers' fishmongers. If this is where you want to go, I promise you we will bring you there very soon indeed. Still, if you ask, we never relied, nor will we ever rely on 'Arafat or al-Asad to defend us. It is all these assumptions, Mr. Speaker, that brought about the intolerable situation in Lebanon. I visited Qiryat Shemona two days before the current operation was launched. I entered a house hit by a katyusha, where the missile made a big hole in the ceiling and entered a bedroom. I saw a blood-soaked bed of a 15-year-old girl, and upon exiting I saw a little boy, five or six years old, playing outside rather than obeying the instructions to stay in the shelter. I asked him why he was not in the shelter, and his answer was: I cannot, I can no longer stay in the shelter. That was the universal feeling of all

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northern residents who can no longer take it, can no longer remain in shelters.

Ultimately, after an erroneous conception, after prolonged and unnecessary restraint, and belatedly, the government decided to launch an operation. [heckling] Mr. Speaker, please take care to establish quiet in the plenary hall. This is your duty; please do it.

Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, throughout Operation Grapes of Wrath, the government has enjoyed the support and encouragement of the Likud. Although there are only about 45 days left before election day, we have not engaged in political considerations. We set aside any partisan consideration and did everything to boost national consensus around the IDF soldiers who fight Hizballah. We are guided by the desire to make it clear to the northern residents, from Qiryat Shemona all the way to Nahariyya, as well as to the IDF soldiers engaged in the antiterror battle in Lebanon, that they are not alone, that we are all united around the wish to guarantee their safety and well-being. We did everything we could to brace the IDF soldiers participating in this operation which is aimed at putting an end to the insecurity in which the northern residents live.

I must say that the northern residents suffer greatly. Thousands of families abandoned their homes, factories shut down, schools were closed, and people found that their houses, thousands of houses were hit — over 1,000 at least in Qiryat Shemona alone. Let anybody try to imagine what it means to pack all one's belongings within 48 hours, leave one's house, move to some guest house or the home of relatives in the south of the country, and wait for the possibility of returning home.

Mr. Prime Minister, one of the primary goals which the government should immediately live up to is to help the northern settlements. I have not heard of any concrete projects that you should adopt now, such as the selective application of the development towns' law to the northern settlements. It is impossible for these settlements to pay a socioeconomic price on top of the security one. There is a series of measures, a series of powers, which should be conferred on the mayors and heads of councils on the northern border so that even under the current circumstances, they could enable the northern citizens to lead normal, almost normal, or at least reasonable lives. This suffering, this sacrifice, is accompanied by something that arouses my pride and appreciation: I have not heard any of the people in the shelters, any of the Qiryat Shemona residents, including those I met in Tel Aviv, say that the operation should be stopped on their behalf. Like all or most other Israeli citizens they say: Continue, continue so as to bring about the desired goal, continue so as to bring about security and peace and quiet to the northern border. In fact, there has not been any military operation in Israel's history in recent years for which the government has enjoyed such great and all-encompassing support as this Operation Grapes of Wrath, with the hope that calm will be regained on the northern border indeed, calm which is different from the provisional tactical breaks to which we were accustomed prior to this operation.

Mr. Speaker, this hope must not come to naught. The northern residents must not return to a life of fear such as that experienced in the preoperation days. The ability of the Hizballah terrorists to hit the northern settlements must not remain the same. The children of Qiryat Shemona and Nahariyya must not continue to live in insecurity; they must not be hostages to the terrorists who will be able to launch katyushas anew anytime they so wish. Operation Grapes of Wrath must not fail. After all this suffering and blood, including the blood of innocent people, we must not return to the situation of insecurity in the north which we experienced before the beginning of the operation.

Mr. Speaker, we must not return to the agreement of understandings. If we return to that agreement, we will return to insecurity and to attacks on IDF soldiers and on the northern settlements. Furthermore, the government should abide by the promise it itself made, through its senior ministers, that the operation will lead to new rules of engagement in Lebanon and to expanded freedom of action for the IDF. Still, the Israeli Government cannot settle for a military campaign. It is the government's duty to apply pressure on the Syrians, who are the true rulers of Lebanon, to end Hizballah's activity from their territory.

Knesset Members, we must not return to the preoperation situation. We must not return to the agreement of understandings. We must not return to a situation in which Israel's deterrence is harmed. Iran and Syria, and the Hizballah terrorists who serve in their mission, must not think that the Israeli Government would stop an extensive military operation before the goals were achieved, thus bringing about a situation in which they would know that they can renew their attacks any time they please.

I do know a tragic mistake took place here. None of us is immune to this tragedy, and when I see those pictures from Lebanon, my fellow Knesset Members — and I am saying this to all Knesset members — my heart is torn as if reference here were to a Jewish child. When children are hurt, there is no difference between Jews, Muslims, and Christians. I am sure we all share the same anxiety. Still, this is the rule for even the most just wars. In 1944, the allies bombed

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the Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen but missed their target; the pilots inadvertently hit a nuns' hospital, with the resulting death of 63 children and four nuns. This happens in every war. It happened in the Gulf War when the U.S. bombers also erred, it happened in Israel's wars, and it has happened now too. It does not happen intentionally, but rather despite all good intentions. World War II was not stopped.... [interrupted by heckling from the floor] None of the just defensive wars that featured such tragedies was halted as a result of the tragedy or its attendant pressures.

I have said that the government enjoys unprecedented support. I know pressure is exerted by PLO ranks, be it members or supporters, and you are used to this pressure since you cooperate with them, but withstand the pressure this time please. You enjoy the wide support of the opposition benches. I can just imagine what would have happened had it been a Likud government in power now. We know what you would have done. We know what you did. We know how you filled city squares, how you demanded inquiry commissions, how you demanded the dismissal of the defense minister, what names you called people who made sacrifices for Israel's security throughout their lives, on the battlefield too. You called those people who were Israel's heroes and who cared for Israel's security war criminals and child murderers. You did all that, but we do not behave so. We give you support. You have no justification not to act since you have a single internal front. [Meretz' Ran Kohen makes inaudible interjection] Ran Kohen, you do not even have the shame of keeping quiet now. You should not have uttered even a single word. Shame on you; shame on you! Why are you not demonstrating in the streets, Ran Kohen? What is this quiet that has seized you? You hypocrite, you miserable soul, hypocrite! We acted responsibly. We acted.... [interrupted by further heckling]

Mr. Speaker, the government is enjoying unprecedented support now and is assured of the home front. I know it is subject to international pressure. We know this pressure. The government boasted of unprecedented international support. Wisdom in statesmanship is not to enlist support by giving away assets from our country, by distributing the assets and getting pats on the back from the Arab world, the Europeans, and the United States. This is no wisdom. Wisdom is to be steadfast at a certain stage, to be steadfast when necessary, and every government reaches the stage of having to be steadfast.

Even the most giving, conciliatory, and weak government reaches the moment of truth when it must stand firm in face of international pressure. You are subject to international pressure now, but although you have internal support, although we are giving you support, we already see signs of weakness. We all knew how to face those pressures, and they were more intense, internally too, but we withstood them and completed the goals we needed to, while the signs that emerge now and concern me are that the government will cave in under international pressure, that it will halt this operation before achieving its goals. If the operation fails, it will bring about much less than what we originally had. It will in fact establish a rule whereby it is impossible to bring security to the northern border.

Mr. Prime Minister, if your government adopts the political and military measures required to bring a secure peace to the northern residents, we will support it regardless of any political or partisan considerations. It is the government's duty to restore security, and it should know that if it acts to achieve this goal, it will win our support.

Mr. Speaker, the antiterror struggle should be waged persistently and feature boldness and initiative. It is a struggle in which we must not manifest political and military weakness or cowardice. It is exactly because we are on the eve of elections and a democratic decision at the polls that Hizballah terrorists, together with their Iranian senders and Syrian patrons and defenders, should know that if a Likud-led government is established, it will fight them uncompromisingly to the bitter end. Iran, which stands behind the katyusha launchers, as well as Syria, which extends its protection to them, should both know that a Likud-led government will take care to bring about bad, very bad days for terrorists, while the peace supporters among our neighbors will enjoy better days. A Likud-led government will place the need to achieve a secure peace for the residents of the State of Israel at the top of its priorities. We will work for a safer life for residents in north Israel and everywhere else in our land.

Knesset Members, Mr. Speaker, a Likud-led government will take care.... [interrupted by heckling] Mr. Speaker, this is not an easy moment, and we should all give our support so that the goals of the operation are completed. If the goals are completed, we will all benefit. If the operation fails, we will all suffer the consequences. It will be the government's responsibility, but we too will bear the results. Failure or success will be measured by the security arrangements that will or will not be achieved on the northern border. I can promise one thing: A year from today, on the eve of the 49th Independence Day, a Likud-led government will take care to make progress in securing peace for all our citizens, in the entire land in general, and on the northern border in particular.

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**Israel: Gen. Levin—Residents of North Can Leave Shelters, Return Home**

*TA2204173296 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1630 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Video report by Qobi Marenko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General 'Amiram Levin, commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Northern Command, today made an optimistic remark. Levin believes that the residents of the north can start considering a return home. Our correspondent Qobi Marenko spoke with the general.

[Begin recording] [Marenko] Do you believe that the residents can start returning to their towns?

[Levin] I think it is desirable to start returning. I am not proposing, however, that we tell any family what to do. We are dealing here with mature and experienced people, each of whom is responsible for his family and his own life. They will act according to their understanding.

[Marenko] As far as the security situation is concerned, however, do you believe it is possible to start returning?

[Levin] The war is not over, and there is still a danger of katyushas, but I hope that this danger has decreased in comparison to what we have experienced until now. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1630 GMT on 22 April includes a report from the north by Dan Scemama, adding: "The commander of the Northern Command informed the residents of Nahariyya and Ma'alot that they can come out of the shelters as soon as this evening. He was referring to the residents of north Nahariyya, who spent the last 12 days in the shelters. The students will be able to resume their studies in the kindergartens and schools tomorrow morning."]

**Israel: IAF Raids 'Terrorist' Targets in South**

*TA2204191996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Air Force [IAF] this evening raided terrorist targets in several places in south Lebanon. All the planes returned safely to base, and the pilots reported accurate hits. The planes and helicopters operated in al-Qulaylah, Shaqra, Jubayl, Mazra'at 'Ayn Abu-Duwayr, and Majdal Silm.

**Israel: Katyushas Hit Galilee; UN Alerted to Launches Near Commands**

*TA2304043996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A small number of katyusha rockets landed in the Galilee panhandle during the early hours of this morning. No reports of casualties or damage.

The Israel Air Force continued last night to attack terrorist targets in southern Lebanon. The army spokesman said all planes returned safely. The pilots reported accurate hits.

Yesterday, four katyusha rockets landed near the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] command in al-Naqurah in the western sector of the security zone. No injuries or damage were reported. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] sources said that one of the rockets fired at the Galilee yesterday was launched close to a command of one of the battalions of soldiers. The army spokesman says the IDF has alerted UNIFIL commanders over the continuing katyusha firings from the areas around UN positions in southern Lebanon.

**Israel: Katyushas Hit Galilee Panhandle; Schools To Remain Closed**

*TA2304064396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A katyusha salvo landed in the Galilee Panhandle a few minutes ago. There are no reports of casualties. Last night, katyushas fell in the sea near the western Galilee.

The Northern Command has changed its decision to reopen all the schools in Nahariyya, and the students in the northern suburbs will be sent home again this morning. Our correspondent Moti 'Eden reports that Mayor Jackie Sabag has reservations about last night's decision by the Northern Command to return life in Nahariyya to normal. The mayor is concerned about further shelling.

**Israel: Minister Sends 'Sharp Protest' Over Cancellation of UN Agriculture Meeting**

*TA2204153496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United Nations has canceled the World Food and Agriculture Committee meeting scheduled to take place in Tel Aviv next week. The reason given for the move was Israel's military operation in Lebanon. Agricultural ministers from 14 countries and representatives from another 30 states were to

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attend the conference to discuss international food shortages expected in another five years. Israel's Agriculture Minister Ya'aqov Tzur sent a letter of sharp protest to the organization's headquarters in Rome.

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**Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir Briefs Reporters on al-Kabariti's Meetings on Iraqi Violence**

*JN2104083796 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Council of Ministers met this evening under Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and discussed several issues. After the meeting, Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir spoke to reporters about al-Kabariti's meeting with Iraqi Ambassador Nuri al-Wayyis and his request for an explanation of the recent murders of Jordanian citizens in Iraq.

[Begin al-Mu'ashshir recording] Recently, we noticed a rise in the number of incidents encountered by our students in Iraq. At the start, these incidents were confined to beatings, but then they went beyond that to murder. As you know, there were about five murder cases in the past week to 10 days. His excellency the prime minister summoned the Iraqi ambassador and asked him to explain what is going on in Iraq. He asked him for an official explanation, because the Jordanian Government is extremely anxious to protect its citizens, wherever they are, particularly after the increase in the number of these incidents in Iraq. His excellency the prime minister also asked Bassam Qaqish, Jordanian ambassador to Iraq, to return to Amman for consultations on this matter.

First of all, we want a clear and convincing explanation from the Iraqi Government, and we officially requested such an explanation from the Iraqi ambassador. We also want to consult with the Jordanian ambassador to get a firsthand report on the issue. What has happened has triggered anxiety, particularly since—as I mentioned earlier—these incidents have increased and often the circumstances in which they have taken place are rather repulsive and call for official explanations. [passage omitted]

I would also like to say that the prime minister had a very good meeting with Palestinian officials Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], and Jamil al-Tarifi today. Several issues were resolved during this meeting, and the two sides agreed on the need to intensify Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, particularly during the coming stage.

Al-Tarifi also met with the minister of transport to discuss the issue of bridge crossings in order to come up with a united Jordanian-Palestinian position and to benefit from the Japanese and German grants for building these bridges. They also discussed preparations for future Jordanian-Palestinian-Israeli meetings on this issue. [end recording]

**Jordan: Ambassador—Return to Iraq Depends on Amman Consultations**

*MM2304110296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Apr 96 p 4*

[Unattributed report: "My Return to Baghdad Depends on Consultations in Amman"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Jordanian Ambassador to Iraq Bassam Qaqish has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that his return to Baghdad depends on the outcome of the consultations with his country's government in Amman.

Ambassador Qaqish made his statement following his arrival in Amman and meeting with Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, whom he briefed on developments in the situation in Iraq.

Qaqish told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT over the telephone that he had been recalled for consultation and to provide some clarifications about a number of issues.

Citing the Iraqi authorities' version of the circumstances of the murder of three Jordanian nationals in al-Ramadi in Iraq, Qaqish said that a number of people wearing military uniform carried out the crime with a view to stealing a truck carrying sugar and that they succeeded in this and dumped the bodies in the desert.

He pointed out that the Iraqi authorities managed to arrest the criminals, including the trader who bought the sugar and the owner of the digger and the machine used to dismantle the truck, whose parts were buried several meters under the ground to conceal the crime.

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**Lebanon: Government Reportedly Rejects Israel's Truce Proposal**

*NC2204114596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 22 Apr (MENA)—MENA has learned that Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi told U.S. Ambassador in Beirut Richard Jones this morning that the Lebanese Government rejects Israel's proposal of a temporary truce separate from a cease-fire agreement and a postponement of negotiations on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 425.

The U.S. ambassador met President al-Hirawi before the latter left for New York today to deliver Lebanon's speech to the UN General Assembly. The ambassador presented the Israeli proposal to the Lebanese president yesterday evening in the presence of Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

Informed sources expect the U.S. ambassador to inform U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher of Lebanon's rejection of the Israeli proposal before the latter meets with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus at noon today.

MENA learned that Lebanese and Syrian officials held intensive consultations late last night over the Israeli truce proposal. The proposal was rejected.

The sources said Damascus and Beirut agreed that they should not fall into the trap of the Israeli proposal, which constitutes an attempt to circumvent international diplomatic efforts and to absorb the anger caused by the massacres of Qana and al-Nabatiyah.

Officials in Beirut also viewed the Israeli proposal as an attempt to buy time, to prepare new Israeli aggressions, and to portray Lebanon as the aggressor. They agreed that a truce will not change the situation and will not secure the return of more than 400,000 refugees to their villages and homes. It will also not set a date for the start of negotiations to reach a fixed and solid agreement to prevent new Israeli aggressions and to implement Security Council Resolution 425.

**Lebanon: Sources—Hizballah Rejects 'Temporary' Truce With Israel**

*NC2204123096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1205 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 22 Apr (MENA)—Official Hizballah sources have rejected outright any temporary truce with Israel. The sources stressed that Hizballah is ready to stop firing katyusha rockets at Israeli settlements if Israel stops its attacks on Lebanese civilians.

The sources said: We need Israeli guarantees that the civilians will not once again be subjected to Israeli massacres. They added that Hizballah considers the violation of Lebanese airspace and territorial waters and the naval blockade against fishermen to be attacks on civilians.

The sources announced that Hizballah categorically refuses to sign any paper, document, or even a statement with Israel, and that that party disavows any entity willing to sign, if there is one.

**Lebanon: Al-Hariri Says Atmosphere of Damascus Talks 'Good,' 'Deep'**

*NC2304061796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri continue their visit to Damascus for the second day, to follow up on the meetings and contacts being held there with the French and U.S. foreign ministers to finalize the formula for the cease-fire agreement and end the Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

Leaders Birri and al-Hariri crowned the series of meetings they held yesterday with Syrian officials with a meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in the presence of Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam. The meeting lasted two hours, after which Prime Minister al-Hariri made the following statement:

[Begin recording] [al-Hariri] We held talks with the president and he informed us of the discussions that were held with the U.S., French, and Russian sides. We discussed all the topics they had discussed. We will stay here tonight so that we can continue our talks tomorrow.

[Unidentified correspondent] What was the atmosphere of the talks that were held here like, Mr. Prime Minister? Was it positive?

[Al-Hariri] Good and deep. There are various points that are being worked on seriously now. [end recording]

Birri and al-Hariri will, at 0930 [0630 GMT] this morning receive French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette at al-Hariri's home in the Syrian capital. They will discuss with him the Israeli position as regards the proposed French cease-fire initiative and the results of coordination between France and the United States to stop the Israeli aggression on Lebanon. At noon, a meeting will be held at the home of Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam. That meeting will be attended by, in addition to Birri and al-Hariri, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. During that meeting, they will continue discussions that began yesterday.

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They will also review the latest stances and results of the diplomatic flurry in order to formulate the new cease-fire understanding. Political sources in Damascus did not rule out the possibility of a meeting between Birri and al-Hariri, on the one hand, and Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is expected to return to the Syrian capital carrying the Israeli response to the formula for an understanding that Christopher received yesterday from President al-Asad.

**Lebanon: Buwayz Comments on U.S., French Cease-Fire Initiatives**

*NC2204114696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1040 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[News Conference by Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents at Beirut International Airport before departing for New York on 22 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Buwayz] The United Nations remains, despite all events in the world, the highest, most noble, and most important forum for presenting causes in the world. I believe that the Lebanese cause deserves to be considered at this level and in this way. The president will present our cause to the delegations attending the UN General Assembly [UNGA] session. Of course, he will present all the various humanitarian, political, security, and military aspects of the cause. He will also bring up the massacres and catastrophes that have actually taken place; he will present the political background; and he will present his demands to the international group. From the information we have on hand, we all know that the United Nations has suffered a serious blow during the past few years as a result of the political imbalance in the world. We believe that the Lebanese cause should be presented first and foremost at this forum.

[Correspondent] The UN resolutions have always been mere scraps of paper. What can Lebanon expect this time round?

[Buwayz] The UNGA issues recommendations based on the information it has before it. These recommendations have a political influence and effect on the Security Council, the General Secretariat, and all the UN organizations, in addition to their impact outside the United Nations. I believe that even though the Security Council is the authority in charge of international security, the UNGA, which is a kind of parliamentary body for the United Nations, provides the broad outlines and major proposals through its recommendations.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister [words indistinct] in Damascus [word indistinct] Secretary Christopher. Have you been informed through diplomatic channels that a cease-fire will go into effect soon?

[Buwayz] Up to this moment, there are many initiatives. Up to this moment, the initiatives are taking shape in the direction of imposing a cease-fire and guaranteeing the security of civilians in the battles that are taking place. So far, the various aspects of what has been called the U.S. initiative have not been finalized. I believe that Christopher is listening to the various parties and influential countries. I believe and I hope that during the next few hours or days we will be able to act on a serious and radical formula.

[Correspondent] In your opinion, Mr. Minister, do you believe that the U.S. initiative at this level will oust or downplay the other European initiatives?

[Buwayz] Actually, there are some general European initiatives. But among them there is a concrete French proposal. I believe that no matter what the situation or whatever the name of the initiative, the French initiative contains many points that will be adopted in the end. Irrespective of what we call the initiative, the content is realistic. In the end it will be the substance that we will agree upon.

[Correspondent] Our last question Mr. Minister: What is the Lebanese Government's stance on the new Israeli proposal regarding a truce?

[Buwayz] As far as we are concerned, what is required first of all is the implementation of Resolution 425, because it is the real, controlled, and effective mechanism for resolving this conflict. If this is not possible in the next few days, then a mechanism guaranteeing the security of civilians and implementing a cease-fire while waiting for radical political solutions should be adopted in order to end the suffering of the people.

**Lebanon: Hizballah Official Predicts Solution 'Near'**

*NC2204190496 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Report by 'Ali Nun in Beirut]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] While all the Lebanese were observing a day of national mourning for the victims of the Qana massacre, which was perpetrated by the Israelis, Israeli warplanes raided, for the first time in the current campaign, al-Na'imah near Beirut, where the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command is said to have bases. [passage omitted]

Hizballah believes that the U.S. initiative to stop the fighting will fail if it does not address certain facts:

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[Begin 'Ammar al-Masawi, Hizballah Political Council member, recording] If the Americans find, based on the experience of the past days and the fact that the Israeli military operation has failed, that it is in their interest to save some U.S. credibility and take a position dictated by their interests to end this cycle, then they may succeed. [end recording]

At any rate, al-Musawi seems somewhat optimistic regarding a date for a cease-fire.

[Begin al-Musawi recording] Things are very much near a solution. In their military operation, the Israelis reached a dead end. And I do not think that there are people [in Israel] calling for further involvement. [end recording]

**Lebanon: France's de Charette Acknowledges 'Important' U.S. Role in Talks**

*BR2204144096 Paris LE FIGARO in French 22 Apr 96 p 6*

[Report by Pierre Rousselin: "Lebanon — Peres Offers Cease-Fire to U.S. Diplomats"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Herve de Charette was in Lebanon yesterday, at the site of the Qana bombing, at a time when Israel was saying that only U.S. mediation could bring about a cease-fire. The juxtaposition of the two events illustrates the fierce diplomatic competition that is taking shape between France and the United States in the Middle East. [passage omitted]

**In Concert**

While the bombings are continuing, especially on the coastal road linking Beirut to the south of the country which is currently virtually cut in two, France is almost playing the role of interpreter for Lebanon's interests and, unavoidably therefore, those of Syria. The Arab camps considers Washington to be too pro-Israeli.

Herve de Charette explained in Damascus: "France is back playing a key a role. That is not so easy in the Middle East where we had largely disappeared from the scene over the years."

In Beirut his reaction was calm in the midst of the controversy. He thanked Mr. Christopher for his efforts, stating that the United States had "an important role to play" in bringing about a cease-fire and that the two countries were working together "in total concert, remaining in close contact." However, he said, "all roads lead to Rome and there is more than one path to peace." He concluded: "In this affair France is calm, determined, open to all, and focused on the fundamental interests of Lebanon."

**Lebanon: U.S. Attitude Reportedly 'Starting To Rile' France**

*BR2304132496 Paris LE MONDE in French 23 Apr 96 p 2*

[Report by Francoise Chipaux: "No Cease-Fire Signed in Lebanon Despite Diplomatic Efforts"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Beirut — Has the conclusion of a cease-fire in Lebanon suffered from the current profusion of attempts at mediation, in particular by the United States and France? Said for the previous 48 hours to be very close, the cessation of hostilities appeared to be in jeopardy again at the start of this week, with each of the protagonists hiding behind the proposals that it found the most suitable. By starting rapidly and strongly in its attempt to put a stop to the conflict, France undoubtedly began the present flurry of diplomatic activity and roused Washington. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said on Saturday [20 April] with a not unjustifiable irony: "Everyone has now joined me in Damascus and I am very pleased to have them all here." The U.S., Russian, Italian (with Rome presiding the EU), and Iranian foreign ministers all flew to the Syrian capital to try to obtain a rapid cease-fire.

The least we can say is that Israel, reticent from the outset of the French initiative, rejects it openly now that the Americans have arrived on the scene. [passage omitted]

The French intervention irritated Washington, which was angry at this incursion into its own private hunting ground of the Middle East. [passage omitted]

Even the meeting a few hours previously between Mr. de Charette and Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati — during which the Frenchman asked Tehran to put pressure on the Hizballah — was considered pointless. [passage omitted]

**Diplomatic Shuttle Between Syria, Israel**

Contrary to what had been announced in Moscow where the G-7 and Russia issued a solemn appeal for a stop to hostilities, there was no meeting in Damascus between the French, U.S., Russian, and European foreign ministers. U.S. Secretary of State Christopher merely granted his Italian and French counterparts a 30-minute audience at the U.S. Embassy. [passage omitted]

While it is true that the U.S. attitude is starting to rile the French — "the French approach is perfectly transparent and coordinated with that of the United States, while the same is not always true of the Americans" — Paris nevertheless accepts readily enough the "essential role"

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of the United States and "is not trying or intending to obstruct it." The U.S. and French proposals based on strengthening the agreements of July 1993 stating that Israel and the Hizballah should spare civilian lives on both sides of the Israeli-Lebanese border, could be combined to obtain a text agreeable to both parties.

**Electoral Backdrop**

The idea of a "truce" proposed on Sunday by Israel to the U.S. secretary of state who, on his return from Damascus was to have communicated it to the Syrian president on Monday, is also included in the French plan. However, as it is announced in Jerusalem this truce is unlimited in time and has aroused fears in Beirut and Damascus that a trap is being laid, seeking to ensure stability in Israel just until the 29 May elections before any serious discussions can begin on settling the crisis. There is also no guarantee that the 300,000 or so Lebanese refugees can return to their villages.

The French proposals provide for a truce of just a few days, long enough to set down in writing and bolster with international guarantees the agreements of 1993. The proposal made by President al-Asad to Warren Christopher to send in international observers also features in a slightly different form in the French proposals which appear to be better disposed to Arab aspirations.

This is the cruelest cut of them all, for, from its initial position as mediator, France, whose suggestions were more or less overtly supported by Syria, Lebanon, and the Hizballah, appears, despite itself, to be now simply the spokesman of one of the two sides. The other side, Israel, trusts only in the United States. The Arab parties involved are themselves divided. As one senior Lebanese official confided on Sunday: "Even if it is a good one, we know full well that we cannot obtain a settlement that is underwritten by France alone. However, Israel must understand that it cannot just force the U.S. plan on us."

**Lebanon: 'Resistance' Downs Israeli Apache Aircraft**

*NC2204172996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1712 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] During the heroic confrontation in Khirbat Silm, the resistance mujahidin hit and downed an Apache, which exploded between Khirbat Silm and al-Mujaydil. Israeli television showed pictures of the helicopter.

**Lebanon: Amal Claims Credit for Downing Israeli Helicopter**

*NC2204184796 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1824 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the news desk: Further on the statement which was issued a short while ago on the downing of the Israeli helicopter, the Amal Movement operations room restates that the aircraft, which exploded after it was hit by the movement's ground defenses, fell in the al-'Abbad area opposite Majdal Silm. The al-'Abbad area falls within the occupied border strip.

The Amal Movement statement said that many residents of al- Sultaniyah and B'ir al-Salasil saw the aircraft when it was hit by the ground defenses. The statement added that the aircraft was hit at 1945 [1645 GMT].

**Lebanon: Al-Hirawi—Will Defend Lebanon at UN**

*NC2204145696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi stated that he is going to the United Nations to defend Lebanon, its people, and its territory. He said that his faith in his homeland is stronger than the tragedy. Noting that Lebanon participated in founding the United Nations, he expressed the hope that Lebanon's voice will receive an attentive ear so that freedom and truth may prevail.

President al-Hirawi affirmed the importance of national unity, which has been exceptionally manifested in the past 10 days, because it is the guarantee for Lebanon's survival as a free and independent country. He said our national unity is stronger than the tragedy. Lebanon should not remain an arena where others settle their accounts on our land.

President al-Hirawi made this statement on board the plane carrying him and his delegation to New York.

**Lebanon: Israeli Forces Said Using Phosphorous, Incendiary Bombs**

*NC2204121796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1205 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent reports that the Israeli occupation forces are pounding al-Sawwanah and Majdal Shims with phosphorous and incendiary bombs.

In response to the Israeli attacks, the resistance fighters fired a salvo of katyushas at northern occupied Palestine.

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**Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Destroy Water Reservoir**

*NC2204173296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1704 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Tension continues to prevail in the south. The Israeli war machine continues to bombard southern areas. Enemy aircraft staged five air raids on the 'Umran village at 1845 [1545 GMT]. At 1910, warplanes raided al-Sultaniyah in the central sector, dropping four air-to-surface missiles. The missiles destroyed the water reservoir in the village. The enemy aircraft raided the 'Ayn Qana-sarba triangle at 1940.

Elsewhere, the enemy agent militia [South Lebanese Army] stopped pumping drinking water to east Sidon areas. Enemy MK reconnaissance planes continue to fly over the targeted areas.

**Lebanon: Israeli Shelling, Overflights Reported**

*NC2304054496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0440 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Qasim Safa, NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre, has reported that early this morning, the villages of 'Aytit, Mahrunah, and the area around Qana came under a violent 240—mm artillery barrage from the Israeli posts in the occupied border strip. The residential areas of the villages of al-Sawwanah, Khirbat Silm, Majdal Silm, Bra'shit, and Qabrikha came under sporadic artillery bombardment. [passage omitted]

Israeli military aircraft continued to fly over the south, breaking the sound barrier and dropping flares until 0300 [0000 GMT] today. Helicopters raided Majdal Silm and nearby valleys. Israeli helicopters, which continued to fly over the area until this morning, raked the villages in the eastern and central sectors. At night the helicopters dropped flares along the coast south of Tyre. Mahmud Manna' from Burj al-Shamali was wounded by flying glass when Israeli aircraft broke the sound barrier.

At 0230 today, Israeli aircraft launched several raids on al-Sh'aytiyah and the road leading to it. Meanwhile most villages along the border were coming under sporadic artillery barrage until this morning. At 0630 today, the villages of al-Sama'iyah and al-Sh'aytiyah, and the vicinity of Dayr Qanun and Ra's al-'Ayn came under sporadic artillery barrage. Before 0700 today, Israeli military aircraft flew over the area. Israeli warships and gunboats are still cruising off the Lebanese coast from Ra's al-Bayyadah in the south to Sidon in the north. These warships continue to fire at the coastal highway between Tyre and Sidon.

**Lebanon: Radio Warns Civilians To Leave Areas Near Hizballah Dwellings**

*NC2304063496 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0614 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[Communique No. 1 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] To the citizens of Lebanon: The Israeli army today resumes its operations against Hizballah terrorists in south Lebanon and wherever they are. All civilians who are near Hizballah homes, offices, bases, commands, and activists must, for their own safety, keep away from those places. Anyone who has not yet left his place of residence away from those places must do so immediately.

Travel to the south is still forbidden. Anyone who does not comply will be putting himself in danger. The Israeli army considers every suspicious vehicle a target. Traffic to the north is allowed.

**Lebanon: Citizens Warned Not To Travel South on Coastal Road**

*NC2304070496 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0650 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[Communique No. 2 "for today"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli navy today has resumed its operations along the coastal road to prevent Hizballah from transferring men, equipment, and vehicles from the north to the south. Civilians must refrain from travelling from Beirut south toward Sidon and Tyre via the coastal road. Anyone who does not comply will endanger himself. Traffic northwards is allowed.

**Lebanon: Hizballah Official Says 'Maximum Rocket Force' Not Used**

*NC2204145496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1428 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Nabil Qawuq, official in charge of Hizballah's Consultative Council in the south, said today that the resistance has not yet been compelled to use the maximum rocket force to strike at the settlements. He stressed that the resistance has made an irrefutable pledge to bombard the settlements as long as Israel continues to attack residential areas and civilians.

Qawuq disclosed that the Hizballah intelligence service had obtained precise information on the enemy's positions in northern Palestine, its settlements, and troop concentrations.

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**Lebanon: 'Resistance' Fires Katyusha Rockets at Israeli Settlements**

*NC2304111096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1059 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from the editors desk: A short while ago the resistance fired several katyusha rockets at the northern Israeli settlements in the occupied territory. Earlier, the Israeli enemy bombed the vicinity of the home of deputy 'Abdallah al-Amin and the al-Malluli valley in the Kharbat Silm area. Israeli military aircraft are now flying over the area.

**Lebanon: Hizballah Leader Qasim Says Israel at 'Deadlock'**

*AU2204141196 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 22 Apr 96 pp 160-161*

[Interview with Deputy Hizballah leader Na'im Qasim by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "We Will Chop That Hand Off"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [DER SPIEGEL] How long do you want to go on firing Katyushas at northern Israel, provoking counterattacks?

[Qasim] What do you expect after the massacres in the al-Nabatiya refugee camp and the United Nations base at Qana, where refugees and expellees were staying? We said over a week ago, when Israel began its aggression, that the Zionists are attacking civilians and civilian targets. But the world did not take it seriously.

[DER SPIEGEL] Have you not had a share in starting that tragedy? After all, Hizballah has used the population as a shield, firing its shells from right beside a refugee camp.

[Qasim] That is Israeli propaganda! We agreed in 1993 that the Hizballah and Israel should stop firing at civilians. Now we have been under permanent fire by the Israeli artillery and airforce for over a week. Not only do they blow up houses, ambulances and shelters are also being bombarded relentlessly.

[DER SPIEGEL] You cannot pretend that the calamity has come over you through no fault of yours.

[Qasim] During the first three days we thought that it would all end soon. Yet, the Israeli airforce did not only attack southern Lebanon, but also areas west of Bekaa. That means that the aggression has spread almost throughout Lebanon. We must be careful to prevent the enemy from intervening southern Lebanon again just to strengthen the government's propaganda in the election campaign at home and improve the population's morale.

[DER SPIEGEL] The Israeli forces are far superior to your militia.

[Qasim] Of course, but we taught them a lesson in 1982 already, together with the Palestinians. Not a single day passed without dead Israelis returning home in their coffins. They tried it again in 1993, but they had to withdraw when they saw that the population crowded around our resistance movement. If Israel is determined to make the same mistake a third time, we will be awaiting its troops.

[DER SPIEGEL] What makes you so confident that the population's solidarity with the Hizballah will hold? The people want to live in peace and quiet.

[Qasim] Talk to the people who have been expelled! All they want us to do is deal more blows to the Israelis. We will continue to attack northern Israel with all the arms that we have got, until Israel stops bombing our villages and people.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your Shi'ite militia only represents part of the Lebanese population. The government in Beirut is mainly interested in reconstructing the country after the civil war.

[Qasim] Yes, the Israelis are hoping to drive a wedge between us and the population. But the people in Lebanon — the Islamic resistance, government, and population — stand united against the aggression. Just recently, a number of Christian leaders met in the Alexandre hotel in East Beirut, the Christian part of Beirut, declaring their support for the Islamic resistance.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you fear that the Lebanese Government and your Syrian protectors could reach an agreement to disarm your resistance fighters?

[Qasim] That is impossible. We agree with Syria that the Israeli enemy must not get away with establishing itself in our country. Syria defends Lebanon's right to resistance.

[DER SPIEGEL] Under what circumstances would you be prepared to end your attacks on Israel?

[Qasim] Israel must leave southern Lebanon unconditionally and immediately. We do not have any illusions, we know exactly that the Israelis will not withdraw from the south that easily. That is why they launch test balloons from time to time to see how far our determination goes. But we will not stop beating them until the last Israeli soldier has left southern Lebanon.

[DER SPIEGEL] The United States has proposed a cease-fire....

[Qasim] ....let me tell you that this plan is nothing but an Israeli dictate approved by the United States. The Americans want Israel to achieve by way of negotiations

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what it cannot reach through military operations. That is why we categorically reject the U.S. plan.

[DER SPIEGEL] Why do you not accept it as a basis for negotiations?

[Qasim] I would like to tell the United States this: You are not honest mediators. You are accomplices in this conflict. You have given Israel the permission to attack us. For four days the Israelis bombarded us, and Washington kept silent persistently. It was only when the French foreign minister got involved that Washington launched its initiative so as not to be pushed aside.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you prefer the French plan? Paris demands an immediate cease-fire, monitored by international forces. The Lebanese Government, Damascus, and Washington should guarantee the ceasefire.

[Qasim] The French plan contains a couple of very positive points, but there are also some points that require detailed examination and further negotiations.

[DER SPIEGEL] But the conflicts in Lebanon cannot be solved without U.S. participation.

[Qasim] The United States is the embodiment of evil in this world. The United States is the devil. Who protects Israel from being condemned by the UN Security Council? The United States is waging war against us through Israel's hand; but we will chop that hand off.

[DER SPIEGEL] Does that mean that your fighters will threaten U.S. targets all over the world in the future?

[Qasim] I know what is behind your insidious question. But the Islamic resistance movement has precise targets. Anyone who attacks us directly, such as the Israelis, is paid back in kind. We will fight those who occupy our country. That does not mean that we will attack the United States, if we do not agree with it politically.

[DER SPIEGEL] How long will you be able to stick it out?

[Qasim] At the moment, Israel is at a deadlock, especially Prime Minister Peres. He wanted to play the big military leader to secure his reelection at the end of May. Now he has been caught in the Lebanese trap. The Israelis must find a way to withdraw from that mess. There are two options: a partial solution or a total solution.

[DER SPIEGEL] What do you mean by that?

[Qasim] A partial solution would be that Israel irrevocably commits not to launch any more attacks against civilians and civilian targets in southern Lebanon. That must also be guaranteed internationally. A total solution would be that Israel withdraws its occupation army from southern Lebanon permanently.

[DER SPIEGEL] Israel would probably reject both these options as a kind of surrender.

[Qasim] Peres and his Foreign Minister Baraq are cheating the population when they pretend that the Israeli army is able to solve the Hizballah problem by military means. Our weapons cannot be knocked from our hands easily. There is no doubt that Peres and Baraq can start a war, but it is not up to them to decide when the war will stop. They have lit a fire without knowing how to put it out again.

**Lebanon: Fadlallah Defends 'Martyrdom Operations'**

*MM1904155196 London FILASTIN AL-MUSLIMAH in Arabic Apr 96 pp 23-25*

[Interview with Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, Hizballah's spiritual leader, by Ghassan Abu-Husayn; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Husayn] The recent series of martyrdom operations which occurred in Palestine has triggered much world attention as well as condemnation. How do you assess these operations from the political and legitimate angles?

[Fadlallah] I believe that if we examine the Arab Islamic-Zionist conflict against the background of the current reality of American arrogance in particular we would find that Israel initiated the battle at the widest level, for it still occupies territory, persecutes people, and confiscates land on the pretext of linking the settlements to the usurping Zionist entity.

Furthermore, it still detains women, young men, and children, and it still kills or wounds Palestinians every day and turns its settlers on the Palestinians. All that means that it is still waging war on the Palestinian people. Wars naturally claim victims who have nothing to do with the issue. We, therefore, view the martyrdom operations carried out by the mujahidin as part of the resistance to the occupation and self-defense and defense of the people. Regardless of all the attempts to focus attention on the tragedies of the Jews at the expense of the Palestinians, we believe that if one studies the martyrdom operations sensibly and carefully one finds that the martyrdom operations managed to destroy the arrogance of the intelligence services which failed in the face of the security-conscious Islamic Movement in Palestine. We saw how it managed to defeat the political despotism of the usurping Zionist authority supported by the world's arrogant powers. With meticulous planning it was able to prove for the

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first time in one way or another through action and reaction that it is difficult for Jews and Arabs, especially Muslims, to coexist on the same land in Palestine and that the natural solution to the problem lies in the return of the Jews, who came from the ends of the world, to the countries from which they came and in which they used to live.

Coexistence is not possible in the present context of the political issue. These operations also demonstrated that prisons, pressures, and assassinations cannot defeat the mujahidin who proceeded on the basis that God is with us.

[Abu-Husayn] But after the recent operations the question of killing civilians was raised by some ulema in Palestine and by others, and the Zionist media harped on the claimed illegitimacy of such actions. What is your shari'ah view on that?

[Fadlallah] They act in self-defense especially if they are pushed into a political or security corner and they seek to preserve their political existence and, perhaps, their security. When we hear voices talking about the killing of civilians we say to them: What about the killing of scores of thousands of civilians in Lebanon and what about the killing of scores or even hundreds of civilians at the beginning of the Zionist occupation of Palestine, and the massacres committed to render the Palestinian people homeless? And what about the scores of worshippers who fell in the Ibrahimi mosque? We did not see these people being as enthusiastic about pointing out these tragedies as they were about the recent operations.

The problem is that many ulema, some of whom are even attributed to the Islamic line, forget that the Jews, in the eyes of such people, are something special and must not be harmed, but the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people, the Arab people, and the Muslim people whose children, young men, and women are killed, are of no consequence and do not arouse any sentiments. I believe that the brother mujahidin did not target civilians out of a complex about killing such people, but there is a point which must be examined politically, namely that any civilian occupying a Palestinian home or any civilian in the Israeli Army's reserves is actually not a civilian in the innocent sense of the world but a virtual soldier and occupier. We view occupation as a military not a civilian condition. Therefore, while we do not subscribe to the killing of civilians, we believe that when war covers vast arenas it might necessitate the felling of a civilian here or a civilian there. I believe that this is a universal matter. We recall here the 8 March massacre carried out by the U.S. intelligence here in Lebanon when, in targeting me, they killed 80 people including a pregnant woman, a woman who lost her limbs, and workers returning from work for some rest. They killed and maimed about 200 people. So the issue appears to fall within the scope of the proverb "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones." I also tell those who volunteer edicts [fatwa] in favor of the enemy: A fatwa must always be well conceived and based on a study of the background and dimension of the issues, not on the superficial picture.

[Abu-Husayn] In the recent spate of operations, the Islamic resistance and Hizballah operations in the south coincided with the operations launched by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in Palestine. How do you view future relations between the two resistance movements, and what effect would that have on the Islamic awakening?

[Fadlallah] It is one movement stemming from multiple realities with numerous roles. I believe that unity of jihad, unity of faith, and the common blood and challenge will consolidate the organic link between the mujahidin here and there, because like prayers, the jihad is one and the same.

We pray through our jihad and we inspire jihad in our prayers.

[Abu-Husayn] The Sharm al-Shaykh antiterrorism summit comes as a quick response to the Zionist entity's reflecting international support for it against the forces of liberation. What is your position on that conference and what results might it produce?

[Fadlallah] We believe that that conference is the U.S. President's conference for the protection of his team in the Zionist entity, that is, the protection of the Labor Party and its leader, in order to end their dilemma. It is a conference linked to the election issue in the Zionist entity, to give the whole world the impression that the whole world supports the Labor Party and its leader with the suggestion that its leader (Peres) is working for peace. It is also linked to the U.S. elections, bearing in mind that that man (Bill Clinton) formed his administration mostly from Jews and incorporated the "Jewish policy" in his policy on the region, to the point that there is no longer a U.S. policy but rather a Jewish policy in the Middle East and perhaps beyond the Middle East, as a result of Jewish pressure on his administration and policy.

So, he is trying to take an initiative that would strengthen his initiative pertaining to the so-called peace in the Middle East which safeguards the usurping entity through the Jewish lobby. Therefore, when we examine the U.S. reaction to these events in the person

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of the President of the United States we find that it is many degrees greater than the reactions of the enemy prime minister...to the point that he lost his balance and became hysterical. So we see that the President of the United States comes to attend the inner government of the usurping entity and seeks to raise the issue emotionally.

The recent operations succeeded in shaking the very essence of the settlement process. That is why they all began to fall in the face of that sharp and strong blow which brings down the entire process. And so we see that the Arabs toeing that American line rushed to that conference to outdo even those sponsoring it.

We wonder, and we address the following question to the Arab leaders and to Clinton himself: Why was there no call for an international conference when the Ibrahimi mosque massacre occurred? And why did he not speak about Jewish extremism with the same strong voice that he now uses when he speaks about Islamic extremism? Why did Israel not arrest all the Israeli right-wing symbols who participated — emotionally, or in the planning, or in the area of information — in the assassination of Rabin?

Why should Israel and the United States ask the head of the self-rule Authority to arrest every member of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad just because some people carried out operations considered to be terrorist operations or anything like that? Does that mean that Israel wants to prove to the world that it has civilized laws and that it would only arrest the person who commits the crime, while others are like insects whose rulers must initiate a process for the extermination of everyone belonging to which carried out the action?

We believe that summer and winter exist on the same surface.... We believe that the conference will only come up with propaganda ploys and threats and will not be able to achieve anything major. It is a conference designed for international political media effect to steer the usurping entity and its government out of its dilemma and the U.S. President out of his dilemma, leaving the Arab rulers with their own dilemma and looking for someone to get them out of it.

The greater the pressure on the Palestinian and Arab mujahidin the more certain they are that the course they are following is the right deterrent course which they must see through to the end.

[Abu-Husayn] Do you expect the conference to produce results that would lead to clashes between the Arab regimes and the Islamic movements in their countries?

[Fadlallah] I do not believe that the phase would allow such a thing, nor allow more than what many Arab rulers are doing in terms of creating problems for the Islamists seeking freedom. These rulers have jeopardized their own regimes and their peoples with this repressive method which does not respond to the calls for dialogue made by the Islamists, who are advocates of dialogue, not violence, but who resort to violence as a reaction to the violence of the occupation, to the state violence, and so on.

That is why we say that many rulers of these regimes do not need that conference to face up to the Islamic condition with violence, ferocity, and savagery because the Americans have impressed upon them that they must confront the Islamists because they are a threat to their regimes.

The problem is that the regional reality is that of an Arab alliance within an Israeli-American circle. "They plot and plan, and God too plans, but the best of planners is God" [Koranic verse].

[Abu-Husayn] The leaders are meeting once again in Sharm al-Shaykh just as they did four months ago at Rabin's funeral.... Some people describe this era as the Zionist era inasmuch as such numbers meet for Israel's sake.... Do you believe that we are entering the dark tunnel of a Zionist era, and what is the way out of that tunnel?

[Fadlallah] I do not believe that there is a Zionist era...but I imagine that more than one state in the world has an interest in the so-called peace, and so they meet to serve their own interests.

But we know from historical experience that the political world could move in a common environment to contain what is considered a tragedy.

I do not believe that there is a Zionist era in the sense that some people talk about, but there is an international game in the context of the Zionist reality which, we acknowledge, has influenced more than one position; but to say that this is a Zionist era would mean negating the tendencies in the world that emanate from the depths of every people and every state so as not to remain silent about a Zionist condition here or there.

We must understand very well that the world is motivated by economic, security, and political interests. Israel does not necessarily have to be the point where the world's interests converge. The Arab reality and the Islamic reality constitute the arena for most world interests.

The problem is that others, though wrong, are united and we, though right, are divided. If we could move in accordance with a plan that would provide for rapprochement and understanding on the basis of what

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is right, or for agreement and unity for the sake of what is right, then there would not even be a Zionist month let alone a Zionist era.

[Abu-Husayn] As you know, Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Hamas Political Bureau, is still detained in the United States. Israel has requested his extradition. Do you believe that the current circumstances might speed up his extradition to Israel? And would the United States do that?

[Fadlallah] I believe that a self-respecting state should, as a host, respect the people who take refuge in it on the basis of its laws or its talk of freedom, but I imagine that the United States is in a state of weightlessness in times of presidential elections, especially as far as the Jewish lobby is concerned. That is why I do not rule anything out.

[Abu-Husayn] Do you expect the measures taken by the Palestinian Authority internally, such as closing down benevolent and social societies and arresting members of the ['Izz-al-Din al-Qassam] Battalions and even Hamas leaders and others, to lead to infighting if the Authority insisted on playing that role?

[Fadlallah] I believe that those who suggested these measures to the Authority in fact want to burn that authority, embarrass it, and prevent it from interacting with the people. An authority which arrests and tortures mujahidin and works hand in hand with the Zionist enemy to put pressure on them is an authority which, the intifadah people must understand, does not deserve to be an authority for the protection of the people. The head of that authority should pay attention to the description given of him by the Likud leader when he said that he was the second guard of Israeli security who was incapable of safeguarding its security.... How can you be described by the Israelis as the second guard of Israeli security who is urged by the Israelis to be loyal and prove your capability to be the top man responsible for Palestinian security?

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**Syria: French Foreign Minister Arrives, Makes Statement**

*JN2204120596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette arrived in Damascus at noon today. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Wahib Fadil, minister of state for presidential affairs; 'Abd-al-Hasib al-Ustuwani, director of the West European Department at the Foreign Ministry; some senior Foreign Ministry officials; and the French ambassador in Damascus and the embassy staff.

De Charette told a SANA correspondent: I am still optimistic that efforts will achieve a peaceful political solution to the current situation in Lebanon. It is true that although matters have taken more time that we expected, we have made progress. In a new development today, I have noticed that all the parties are willing to reach a solution and a cease-fire.

De Charette also said: We are discussing tangible issues, which are undoubtedly difficult. France is doing its best so that the legitimate interests of each party can be taken into consideration.

De Charette said he had lengthy talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. He added: I believe that matters are advancing from this angle, and I believe that today will be an important one.

De Charette concluded: I came to Damascus to discuss these issues with the Syrian officials, and I hope I can push matters forward in a useful way.

**Syria: Al-Asad Receives French Foreign Minister 22 Apr**

*JN2204195396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 2025 today French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and his delegation. The meeting, which took place at the People's Palace, was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and French Ambassador in Damascus Jean-Claude Cousseran.

**Syria: Al-Asad Receives Russia's Primakov 22 Apr**

*JN2204153096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1530 today Russian Foreign Minister Yevegeniy Primakov and his delegation, including the Russian ambassador in Damascus. The meeting took place at the People's Palace.

**Syria: Russia's Primakov Says Mission 'Not Over Yet,' Departs**

*JN2204201296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1530 today Russian Foreign Minister Yevegeniy Primakov and his delegation, including the Russian ambassador in Damascus. The meeting took place at the People's Palace. They discussed the current developments in Lebanon and the region in the light of the ceaseless Israeli aggression, as well as the efforts to end it.

Primakov left Damascus tonight following a visit to Syria. He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Assistant Foreign Minister Raslan 'Allush, senior Foreign Ministry staff, and the Russian ambassador in Damascus and his embassy staff.

Primakov made a statement to a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent in which he said that Russia will do all it can to achieve just peace in this region. He said: We are not working alone. The U.S. secretary of state and the French foreign minister are also here. The Italian foreign minister and head of the EU group was also here. We are all keen to achieving a solution to the tense situation in Lebanon. Each of us is trying to resolve the situation through the means he has at his disposal.

Primakov concluded by saying: I had the honor of meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad twice in Damascus. I am now returning to Moscow. However, my mission is not over yet. My deputy will stay here to continue the mission. We hope to achieve success.

**Syria: French Spokesman on Russia's Primakov-France's de Charette Meeting**

*JN2204173596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Russian Foreign Minister Yevegeniy Primakov received his French counterpart Herve de Charette at the Russian Embassy in Damascus today.

In a statement to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent following this meeting, (Herve de Trion), official spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry, said that the objective of the meeting was to exchange viewpoints about the situation to reach a cease-fire and make security arrangements to protect civilians, so that the cease-fire will hold better than the July 1993 understanding.

De Trion added that the two sides discussed the possibility of resuming the peace process on the Syrian and

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Lebanese tracks soon. He said that he felt the Russian and French viewpoints were identical on this issue. De Trion said: I believe that the Russian side desires French participation, and the French side desires Russian participation, particularly in the field of the mechanism of giving assurances after a cease-fire is reached.

He pointed out: France, following a long absence from the Middle East, wants to work diligently to achieve peace in the region.

De Trion added: I can say that Israel now understands the special relations of friendship among France, Syria, and Lebanon. These relations are devoted to serving the peace process.

He added that the French and Americans have now realized the need to intensify their efforts to achieve peace. He said that de Charette held a lengthy telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher today, and they decided to work together with the parties concerned to achieve peace.

He said that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres now understands the need for French participation, and that he does not agree with the entire French initiative, but he understands that France can take part in efforts to reach a more lasting cease-fire.

He noted: There are three steps to be taken. These are: A cease-fire, security arrangements which guarantee protection for civilians, and then a return to the peace process.

He added: There is coordination among the Americans, French, and the Russians. As a cosponsor of the Madrid conference, Russia wants to contribute to the security guarantees. France welcomes this initiative.

**Syria: U.S. Spokesman Cited on al-Asad-Christopher Talks**

*JN2204164796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the People's Palace at 1115 [0815 GMT] today. [passage omitted]

In a statement after the meeting, U.S. State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns said: Christopher held a good meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad this morning. In his statement to journalists today, Burns said the U.S. secretary of state will meet again with President Hafiz al-Asad this evening to continue the discussion of the presented ideas. The U.S. spokesman noted that they have reached the peak of very important talks aimed at achieving a cease-fire and at restoring the commitment to the understanding reached in 1993. He added that this requires a long time because the process is very difficult. He also said that the U.S. secretary of state is exerting great efforts to achieve a cease-fire.

Burns noted that Secretary Christopher will head for Israel later this evening. Asked if a kind of truce will be reached instead of a real cease-fire, he said that the talks deal with reaching an effective cease-fire and the focus is on restoring commitment to the understanding reached in 1993. He added: We held talks with the Israelis and we are presenting the overall ideas through the talks we are holding with the parties. However, it is too early to deal with the essence of the talks.

Asked about coordination with the French side, Burns said: Secretary Christopher had a telephone conversation with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette last night and the talks were very good. He added that de Charette would have a telephone conversation with Christopher today, or that they would meet later.

Asked if a written agreement is being prepared, Burns said: A series of ideas is being discussed now which aim at reaching a cease-fire. He added that the United States prefers to reach a written agreement based on the understanding reached in 1993. Of course, things are left up to the parties to decide what is to be done, he said

**Syria: Christopher Cited on Talks With al-Asad**

*JN2204192296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the People's Palace at 1115 [0815 GMT] today. Christopher was accompanied by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process, and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim.

This meeting was followed by an expanded meeting that was attended by the president; Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant foreign minister; and Walid al-Mu'allim and Dr. Mikha'il Wahbah, Syrian delegates to the peace talks.

The expanded meeting President Hafiz al-Asad held with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher was resumed at 1730 today to complete discussion on issues discussed during the morning session.

In a statement to journalists following his second meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, U.S. Secretary

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of State Warren Christopher said: I held five-hour talks with President Hafiz al-Asad today, which dealt with the issue of restoring commitment to the 1993 understanding.

Christopher added: During the morning session with President Hafiz al-Asad, we focused on the cease-fire objective, and the exchange of ideas between the two sides on the means to achieve this. He said he will leave for Israel to discuss the proposed Syrian ideas with the Israeli side. [passage omitted]

**Syria: Christopher Concludes 2-Day Visit, Departs**

*JN2204205796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad received U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the People's Palace at 1115 [0815 GMT] today. Christopher was accompanied by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process, and Christopher Ross, U.S. ambassador in Damascus. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim. [passage omitted]

Christopher left Damascus this evening after a two-day visit to Syria.

**Syria: Al-Asad Receives Lebanon's Birri, al-Hariri**

*JN2304053896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri at al-Rawdah Palace at 2200 yesterday. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

The conferees tackled the situation in the Lebanese arena and contacts made with the various parties to end the situation that resulted from Israel's acts of aggression.

**Syria: Iranian Foreign Minister Arrives in Damascus 23 Apr**

*JN2304094996 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0823 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 23 Apr (SANA) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was received at Damascus International Airport by Assistant Foreign Minister Raslan 'Allush, senior Foreign Ministry officials, the Iranian ambassador in Damascus, and the embassy's staff.

In a statement to a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, correspondent, Velayati said he hopes that all peace-loving peoples will be able to put an end to the Israeli acts of aggression against the Lebanese people through the international endeavors and the efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC].

He said that during his visit to Morocco, he conveyed a message from the Iranian president to the Moroccan king on the regrettable situation in Lebanon and the Israeli acts of aggression against the Lebanese people.

Velayati said that his talks with the Moroccan king and prime minister came in view of the fact that Morocco is the current president of the OIC.

Velayati paid a one-day visit to Morocco yesterday.

**Syria: Papers Say Peres 'Escalating' Situation in South Lebanon**

*JN2304075096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0510 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "No Solution Other Than Just, Comprehensive Peace," AL-BA'TH says Israel has gone too far in its belligerence and savage crimes in southern Lebanon. Whatever obstacles Israel creates to abort international efforts that seek to stop the aggression, Israel will have to admit that its aggression has failed to achieve any objective.

AL-BA'TH adds: No doubt, Israel managed to destroy Lebanon's cities, villages, and towns, using the most modern tools of murder and destruction in the U.S. weapons arsenal. Israel definitely dealt a strong blow to Lebanon's economy. This economy was just about to recover after Lebanon overcame the civil war ordeal. However, the fact remains that Israel cannot impose a fait accompli on the Arab nation, nor can it force its conditions and dictates. Israel cannot force the Arabs to take part in the suspect scheme that is being planned for the region. This scheme crystallized after the recent military-security agreement between Turkey and Israel.

AL-BA'TH goes on: Thanks to its solid national unity and the support of Syria, the Arab masses, and their active forces, Lebanon will get over the ordeal and the tragedies and losses of the Zionist aggression. Lebanon will show once again that it is stronger than all hostile conspiracies and schemes.

AL-BA'TH says Israel is back to square one. Israel cannot achieve its alleged security, except by establishing a just, comprehensive peace that eliminates all manifestations of tension, explosion, and chaos. Israel alone is

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responsible for the existence and continuation of such manifestations.

AL-BA'TH concludes: Peace that is based on Security Council resolutions, international legitimacy, and the removal of Israeli occupation is the only way to achieve security, stability, and economic progress in the region.

TISHRIN ridicules Peres' claims at the Israeli Knesset yesterday that the victims of the Qana massacre in southern Lebanon fell as a result of what he called terrorism, and not because of the Israeli shelling. Peres' claims fooled no one. The whole world showed sympathy with Lebanon and condemned the Israeli criminal operation. Israel itself was charged with terrorism. Most nations that took part in the Sharm al-Shaykh summit did not attend the follow-up meeting in Luxembourg, after these nations saw with their own eyes that Israel is the source of organized terrorism and that it would not stop at anything.

TISHRIN adds: What is more serious is that Shim'on Peres is escalating the situation in southern Lebanon and displaying his skills in savagery for purely electoral reasons and as a result of his competition with the Likud over extremism to inflame the Zionist community. Peres, who refused to reembrace the July 1993 understanding on civilians, violated this understanding time and again. His government did not honor any agreement, including the Oslo agreement, in spite of its fragility, weakness, and disregard for the rights of the Palestinian people.

TISHRIN asserts that all the region's problems and tragedies are caused by the Israeli occupation and the aggressive Zionist spirit, which subsides for a while only to gather more momentum all of a sudden. This situation can only be addressed by implementing Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and forcing Israel to honor the resolutions of international legitimacy, its principles, and charters.

TISHRIN concludes: To remedy this situation, international law must be enforced and the Israeli law of the jungle must come to an end. Israel must also withdraw fully from southern Lebanon and the Golan and allow the return of refugees and displaced people to their country. In addition, one standard should be adopted in dealing with the aggressors. Only then will Israel submit to the will of the international community and realize its true position in the region and not deal with others on the basis that it controls U.S. decisionmaking and power.

**Syria: Radio—Israel's Defenders Responsible for 'Crimes'**

*JN2204150996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: Reaching a cease-fire agreement between the Lebanese national resistance and Israel may be significant, but a cease-fire is no more than an armed truce that could collapse at any moment if it is not used to eliminate the causes of the conflict. Without removing these causes renewed confrontation and fighting could occur on any day or at any moment. There is no doubt that the causes of the conflict are well known to everybody. However, these causes are ignored by unfair people, who support Israel, collude with it, and back its large-scale crime of occupying the Arab territory, as well as the consequent crimes that were committed to entrench occupation and conquer the will of the people, whose homeland was occupied, whose land was usurped, and whose dignity was hurt.

The cease-fire can in no way be a goal in itself or end the factors of conflict between the Lebanese national resistance and Israel. Resistance is not a hobby for the Lebanese people. Rather, it is a natural reaction to the continued Israeli occupation of part of the Lebanese territory. All attempts to end the resistance before the liberation of the south from the dirty occupation and before the expulsion of the last Israel soldier from its soil will be useless.

Over the past years, Israel has used all means and weapons to conquer the will of the resistance but failed to achieve what it had wanted. It may be also clear that the hell Israel has poured on Lebanon from land, sea, and air did not weaken the resistance and its determination to continue its struggle to liberate its land. Although Israel's fire in Lebanon has burned, destroyed, and killed hundreds of women, children, and elderly, it did not harm the essence of resistance; rather it has strengthened it.

After 12 days of continued aggression, the Lebanese national resistance is still in good shape. Israel's fire has succeeded only in exposing to the world the reality of Israel's existence as a hostile entity. This entity was established through terrorism and is still using terrorism as a way to achieve its ambitions and its goals that are beautified by the mentality of myths and the dreams of establishing an empire to spread its hegemony over the Arab East, the Arab Maghreb, and beyond.

Undoubtedly, the expansion of aggression against Lebanon clearly shows that Israel's claim that it

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is targeting the resistance bases entails delusions, cheating, and attempts to conceal its intentions. The aggression, which Israel gave the name of the grapes of wrath, carried grapes of rancor against Lebanon after it succeeded in overcoming its ordeal, and indignation against it because it managed to reunite its ranks, to reconstruct what was destroyed of its facilities and installations, and to reactivate its economy. In addition to this, they are grapes of brutality, barbarism, crime, thirst for blood, killing of innocent people, and burying women, children, and the elderly alive under the rubble of the demolished houses and the destroyed shelters. They are grapes of a ravenous appetite which enjoys the scene of the amputated extremities, the chopped heads, and the cut abdomens.

It has become very clear what Israel wants. However, what still needs further clarification is which Israel does the international community accept to be as one of its members? Does it accept it as a hostile, mutinous entity, or a peaceful entity within the borders which were drawn for it and on the area allocated for it?

The international community should now realize that peace in the Middle East is an issue of challenge to it and to its credibility, especially since it expresses concern about confronting any aggression, eliminating the results of this aggression, and achieving right and justice. The international community should also realize that the crisis is too large and too serious to be left unsettled. Failure to find a peaceful solution to the crisis based on right and justice will pose immense dangers to world peace and interests.

Our call on the international community to assume its responsibilities and to play its role in undermining and deterring Israel and putting an end to its aggressions and ambitions comes from the belief that what we call for does not go far beyond the duty of this community. If it does not play this role, its existence will no longer be necessary.

Seriousness in facing the challenge of peace or war is the only way to end Israel's aggression and its disdain for all values, principles, and laws. We believe it is not only Israel who is responsible for the crimes it perpetrates, which can be classified as war crimes, but also all those who protect and defend Israel and bless its unrestrained craziness which wreaks havoc on earth, destroys, and kills without being deterred.

**Syria: World Urged To Pressure Israel To Withdraw From Lebanon**

*JN2204074496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0510 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary titled "Israeli Aggression Continues Unabated," the newspaper TISHRIN says that Israel is still far removed from a political solution to the dangerous situation created by its barbaric aggression against Lebanon and the Lebanese people. Israel has continued to handle the international initiatives aimed at achieving a cease-fire in southern Lebanon with contempt and a lack of seriousness, despite the condemnations its barbaric and Nazi-like bombardment of civilians and its massacres in steadfast southern Lebanon have drawn.

TISHRIN adds: By lending deaf ears to the political and humanitarian appeals for an end to the barbaric and aggressive practices, the Israelis have shown that they have expansionist goals and that they are engaged in maneuverings and procrastination. Israel is offering pretexts to hide its rancor and aggressiveness toward Lebanon, Arabs, and Muslims. This also shows that Israel still believes that its war machine is capable of sowing panic in the hearts of the Lebanese people, killing more Lebanese people, and displacing the Lebanese citizens who had refused to leave southern Lebanon.

TISHRIN concludes: The Israeli barbarism has stoked the resistance of the Lebanese people, promoted their firm national unity, and laid bare the alleged Israeli efforts to achieve peace and combat terrorism. Through this barbaric aggression against Lebanon, Israel is violating the rules of warfare and acting against peace. The world community has realized once again that Israel does not hesitate to commit atrocities that harm Arab rights, existence, and territory. Deterring and curbing Israeli belligerency has become an international responsibility. It is the duty of all humane forces to denounce Israel's racist and terrorist policies, which are pouring destruction, death, and rancor on Lebanon and the Lebanese people.

In a commentary headlined "Aggressive Policy and True Peace," the newspaper AL-BA'TH notes the arguments the Peres government has advanced to justify its brutal actions in southern Lebanon. It views these actions as acts of self-defense, even though the entire world realizes that what Israel is doing in southern Lebanon is indiscriminate killing aimed at destroying Lebanon's economic infrastructure. The constant barbaric Israeli aggression against Lebanon has ulterior motives, chief among which is torpedoing the peace process. The entire

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world, except Israel and those supporting it, realizes that a solution to the crisis lies in Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in compliance with Resolution 425, and not in the brutal Israeli actions, which have outshone Nazi crimes.

AL-BA'TH concludes: A solution to the regional conflict lies in the implementation of the relevant international legitimacy resolutions. These resolutions are enshrined in the U.S. peace initiative that constituted the foundation of the Madrid peace conference, which is grounded in the principle of exchanging land for peace. Israel's persistence with the policy of aggression in an attempt to force faits accomplis and deals on the entire region is impossible to accept under any circumstance.

**Syria: UN Resolution 425 Called 'Only Guarantee' of Security**

*JN2104135796 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 18 Apr 96 p 5*

[Editorial: "'425' Only Solution"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For seven days running yesterday Lebanon, its south, its west and Beirut had been pounded mercilessly by Israeli air-raids, artillery and from the sea. Villages and towns are emptied. The inhabitants are driven homeless; about half a million people are now displaced, made refugees, and the houses rumbled like carton boxes under the hammer of Israeli raids and guns. The Israelis moved in to unleash their heinous attack with nothing to deter them, using as their unfounded pretext their fight against the Lebanese resistance and ensuring security of the Galilee, forgetting or pretending to forget their occupation of Lebanese land and their harassment against the Lebanese in those occupied territories.

It seems useless to remind those Israelis, and their backers, that their occupation has bred resistance. Is it sensible to think for a single moment that there would have been resistance had there been no occupation? Yet, this simple reasoning is not acceptable to those Israelis who are bent on occupying the land of others by the use of force. And this is crystal clear by the repeated violations of any agreement they enter into. In 1993 the Israelis and the Lebanese resistance agreed that there would be no attacks on civilian targets. They reneged and started shelling civilian targets in Lebanon, sometimes they allege it was by mistake, but they had repeated these acts. In some cases, children and small girls were killed and they want not to be accounted for. The UN peace keepers were also their targets. Can it then be believed that the aim of their aggression is to deter the resistance men and protect the security of their northern settlements?

Paradoxically, the American co-sponsor of the peace process took a biased stand, forgetting its role as an honest and impartial broker for peace. The United States supported the Israeli attack since its outset, and after six days of raids round the clock came up with a proposal which was described by both Lebanese Prime Minister and Foreign Minister as "difficult to accept." It is not surprising either to hear news from Israel saying that Tel Aviv has "its pre-conditions for the timing of the American intervention" to halt the Israeli aggressions.

On the other hand, Syria has declared her support for Lebanon and its steadfastness. President al-Asad welcomed Syrian-French cooperation to halt the aggression and said "Syria shares with Lebanon its ordeal and with it bears the burden resulting from the Israeli aggression against its land and sons."

However, if a radical solution is being sought to ensure stability and security for the two sides particularly across the border, the solution is handy. It is UN Resolution 425 adopted by the Security Council in 1978 and providing for the immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal. This withdrawal and the ending of Israeli occupation is the only guarantee for security.

**Syria: Papers Call For 'Deterrent Sanctions' Against Israel**

*JN2104081596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0507 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] TISHRIN comments on the intensive diplomatic activity in Damascus to stop the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. Israel has drowned Lebanon in its grudges, displaced hundreds of thousands of civilians, and committed horrible massacres against children and women. In light of this situation, the foreign ministers of France, Italy, Russia, and Iran, as well as the U.S. secretary of state, came to Damascus to find solutions to the crazy war.

The paper says Syria was the first to warn Israel against embarking on military adventures. Syria called for abiding by the July 1993 understanding and the Security Council resolutions. Israel is always the first to initiate shelling against civilians.

TISHRIN adds that escalating the aggression against Lebanon gave antipeace extremists in Israel a golden opportunity to deal a fatal blow to the peace process. No sooner had they received a green light for their aggression and made it public that they were targeting the resistance, than the shells and missiles started to fall on Lebanese civilians. The residents of cities, villages, and towns are regularly warned to evacuate.

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The paper adds: The Lebanese national resistance has not been affected at all by Israel's savage shelling. In fact, it has increased its activity and has retaliated twice as hard, thus revealing to the public that the Israeli generals are really seeking to dismember Lebanon in accordance with the familiar adopted by all Israeli Governments. Developments bear out Syria's sound position. Syria was right when it said that a solution in southern Lebanon is a political, not military, one and that shells, missiles, and massacres do not solve the problem. On the contrary, they make the situation more complicated and tense. The ultimate objective is to destroy the peace process.

TISHRIN asserts that Israel will never reap the fruit of its aggression. Israel should not think, even for a moment, that Lebanon and Syria will yield to its conditions and dictates. The Israeli occupation is the cause of trouble and the source of tension. Peace can be achieved in the region if Israel withdraws completely from southern Lebanon and the Golan.

TISHRIN concludes that it is time for the international community to impose deterrent sanctions against Israel, which has so far not implemented the Security Council resolutions. Israel allows itself to practice crazy belligerence in the region.

On the same issue, AL-THAWRAH says: The Israeli aggression against Lebanon came at a time when Israel is turning its back on the peace process and working publicly to build an interlocking network of military alliances.

AL-THAWRAH says Israel has some direct objectives in Lebanon, such as striking at the resistance, undermining Lebanon's steadfastness, and weakening the unified Syrian-Lebanese position on the peace process. This is because Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is the one who propounds the Israeli concept of a new Middle East. Shim'on Peres wants to reassume power in Israel at the expense of the Arab bloodbath in Lebanon. Peres also wants to prepare for the next steps, through which he envisions creating a new Middle East after subjugating the entire region and completing the missing links of the settlement and the partial deals that have proved to be fragile.

The paper adds that, under this flagrant Israeli aggression in Lebanon, the region is witnessing various military maneuvers. All this took place after the Sharm al-Shaykh meeting, which was meant to be an international cover for Israel's official terrorism.

The paper concludes that the Arabs should heed the threats and unify their ranks and efforts based on higher Arab interests, which should take precedence over narrow, regional interests.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: Damascus is witnessing a flurry of international diplomatic activity and Syrian efforts to contain the aggression against the brothers in Lebanon. We stress here that the fact that Israel is the aggressor and the one who started the aggression must not be ignored. Israel is practicing terrorism, a destructive war, and organized crime. This behavior must not go unpunished. Israel must pay the price.

AL-THAWRAH asserts that a political solution is the only way out and the only guarantee of security and stability in the region, not aggression and crime. This solution must be based on justice and right, international legitimacy, implementing the Security Council resolutions, and withdrawing from southern Lebanon and western al-Biqa'.

**Syria: Radio—Christopher's Task 'Difficult,' Visit 'Too Late'**

*JN1904191796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The entire world was moved by the Israeli massacres, particularly the appalling Qana massacre which took place yesterday. The Israeli army tore down a UN building sheltering a large number of Lebanese citizens who were displaced from their cities and towns by the Zionist aggressors. Over 100 people were killed and more than 120 others were wounded in the fierce Israeli shelling, most of whom were women and children. Every hour the list of victims is growing longer and longer.

The invading Israeli forces had also destroyed a building in the city of al-Nabatiyah, killing 11 people; that is an entire family including the father, the mother, and their nine children. Earlier, Israel bombarded Red Cross ambulances, burning a number of children. The list of Israeli crimes against Lebanon is long and all the victims are civilians.

Such incidents which were reported by world television networks and other mass media, rebut Israeli claims that it only attacks Lebanese resistance men. These incidents also put the U.S. Administration in an extremely embarrassing position so that President Clinton, for the fist time, had to call for an immediate cease-fire.

It is well known that the United States openly supported the vicious Israeli attack on Lebanon and gave it the political cover and justifications it needed. It even went so

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far as to restrain the efficiency of the Security Council, preventing it from issuing a resolution that condemns Israeli's practices in Lebanon as well as the Israeli cease-fire initiative. Lebanon rejected the Israeli initiative in the form in which it was proposed because it stipulates providing the Israeli occupation forces with protection without referring to the withdrawal of these forces from southern Lebanon, taking into consideration that the Israeli occupation—which violates the resolutions of international legitimacy, particularly Resolution 425—is the real reason behind tension and all explosions in the region.

It is a fact that in supporting the Israeli aggression, the United States has lost a great deal of its credibility. The least that can be said in this regard, is that Christopher's visit to the region will be too late because very significant developments have taken place:

The first is the collective Arab support for Lebanon's steadfastness, the unanimous Arab condemnation of the Israeli aggression, and the fact that a number of Arab states have admitted that they were mistaken to normalize relations with Israel.

The second is the demand by many states to postpone the foreign ministers' conference—which emanated form the Sharm al-Shaykh summit and was supposed to be held in Luxembourg—after they realized that the conference was basically aimed at giving blessings to the Israeli executioner and penalizing the victim. They also came to the realization that Israel has committed terrorist crimes that exceed many fold those attributed to others.

The third is Lebanon's steadfastness in the face of the attacks, the Lebanese officials' declaration that they will not yield to Israeli conditions and dictates, and Syria's full and absolute support for Lebanon.

The fourth is the continuation of the Lebanese resistance activity despite the tonnes of bombs Israel is pouring on southern Lebanon. This confirms the failure of this Israeli aggression just as the previous Israeli attacks failed in the past.

The fifth is the French initiative which enjoyed the support of Arabs because it was objective and had some positive elements.

The sixth is the exposure of the Israeli image before the world public opinion. The Israeli army and officials now appear as murderers and criminals who kill children and women and do not hesitate to commit the most hideous of massacres violating the sanctity of international resolution, principles, and agreements.

All the above facts revealed to everyone that the Israeli aggression failed to achieve its goals, and that resorting to blind force to break the will of Lebanese steadfastness has also failed. This has forced Israel and the United States to call for a cease-fire, although they rejected such a thing in the past. The Israeli prime minister called on the Lebanese officials to negotiate, although it was he who pulled out from the peace negotiations, and it was Israel which, over the past five years, obstructed progress on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks.

Before and during the aggression, Syria said that the solution in southern Lebanon is political. It made it clear that blind force does not solve anything; on the contrary, it further complicates the situation. Syria also said that the crucial and sound solution lies in Israel's implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy, particularly Resolutions 425, 242, and 338, in its full withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Golan, and in establishing a permanent, just, and comprehensive peace in the region.

Christopher will come to the region tomorrow to fix what can be fixed. However, he will find that he has a difficult task to accomplish. There are heavy losses in human lives and property in Lebanon. The loss is also great with regard to the peace process and the credibility of the United States following the exposure of the goals of the treacherous Israeli aggression, particularly those related to evacuating the south of its inhabitants and indiscriminately killing civilians.

Syria and Lebanon call for establishing certain facts on the ground; namely, Israel's full withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Golan as well as implementation of the international resolutions. They do not want a mere declaration of Israeli intentions now that the Lebanese people have—over the past few and difficult days—come to grips with some of these intentions and realized that they are entail destruction of life, killing innocent people, displacement of inhabitants, and systematic terrorism.

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## Afghanistan

### Afghanistan: Pakistani Party Leader Arrives in Kabul To Mediate

*LD2104170496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Qazi Husain Ahmad, the leader of the Jam'iyat-e Eslami of Pakistan, has gone to Kabul. According to a report by news agencies, the aim of Qazi Husain Ahmad's visit to Afghanistan is to mediate between rival Afghan factions to resolve the Afghan problem. He plans to meet President Borhanoddin Rabbani and other Afghan Government officials and to hold talks with them on putting an end to the ongoing fighting in the country and on the normalization of Kabul-Islamabad relations.

At the start of his visit to Afghanistan, the leader of the Jam'iyat-e Eslami of Pakistan met Golboddin Hekmatyar, the leader of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], in Jalalabad yesterday and held talks with him.

### Afghanistan: Taleban Delegation Departs Herat for Iran

*LD2204143796 Tehran IRNA in English 1209 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, April 22, IRNA — A delegation of Afghan student militia known as Taleban left the Afghan city of Herat for Iran Monday [22 April] for talks with Iranian officials on the Afghan crisis.

A member of the Taleban's central council, Maulavi Vakil Ahmad told IRNA in Kandahar that the delegation consisted of Governor-general of Herat Maulavi Yar Mohammad, Friday prayer leader of the central mosque in Herat, representative of the group in the Afghan Province of Tekhar and four other officials.

Vakil Ahmad hoped that the visit would serve to improve relations between Iran and the Taleban.

### Afghanistan: Rabbani Urges State Organs To Improve Affairs

*LD2204200996 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This morning, an extraordinary session of the cabinet was held under the chairmanship of esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The presidential press office reported to us that the esteemed president first spoke about the observation of order and regularity in work and the further improvement of affairs in state organs.

The esteemed president said: The current moment in the country necessitates that the government organization as a whole and all state organs should be at the service of the people. Work must be carried out speedily, in an orderly fashion, and with care.

Esteemed Prof. Borhanoddin Rabbani added: The observation of rules and hierarchy is a basic precondition of a better order in work. So, all government administrations and organs must present their proposals through management lines and legal channels.

The esteemed president added: Organizations and state administrations should be in the service of the people. More adherence to legality will result in more attention to the alleviation of compatriots' problems. In state organs, the principle of authority, competence, and the division of duties must be taken into consideration in order that confusion in work [words indistinct] should be averted. In order to implement this, the presidential offices, the premiership offices, and other state organizations should demonstrate more care and vigor in the execution of their duties.

The esteemed president also said: The current economic situation, ways of increasing state income, savings, and the prevention of extra expenses require serious attention. The income resources which have not yet been effectively utilized should be used to improve the economic situation of the country, and should further be employed in the service of the people. It is the duty of the government to make comprehensive efforts to develop the national economy, to increase income sources, and to stabilize the economic situation of society. [passage omitted]

### Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Leader Says Talks With Government Stalled

*LD2204162896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] [monitored in progress] [Hekmatyar — in Dari] When they realize that talks between Hezb-e Eslami and Jam'iyat-e Eslami will lead to the ending of the crisis in the country, the establishment of a strong central government, countering plots as well as a joint administration and joint defense — a joint administration based on equality and fraternity — there will be no problems from our side.

We sent a delegation recently to Kabul to finalize an agreement — and we also told Ustad [title] Sayyaf [Ettehad-e Eslami leader] that next time he was to come, he should bring a final proposal so that the talks would not be delayed further. But unfortunately

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he did not come with a final proposal, so we had to send a delegation to Kabul. Furthermore, our delegation did not get a favorable impression from its talks in Kabul. [words indistinct] but they got the impression that the majority wanted an alliance between the two sides. We understand that the committed brothers in Jam'iyat — even the ordinary people in Kabul, the people on the street — feel that the two sides should come together. They should reach an agreement — conclude an agreement to ensure peace and to put an end to the fighting. They believe that the establishment of a central government is necessary.

Regretfully, our delegation did not receive a clear and unambiguous reply. Now my message, with cordial compliments, to all the brothers there is that we are ready and are completely prepared and the key to the solution to this problem lies with you. When you decide that this problem should be resolved, there will be no problems or obstruction from our side. May you be successful. These words said, I wish you and myself forgiveness from God.

**Afghanistan: 1 Person Killed in Rocket Attack on Kabul**

*LD2204171096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Today the Taleban fired rockets into residential areas of Kabul city. BAKHTAR reports that as a result of the landing of the Taleban-fired rockets, one of the residents of Karta-e Naw was martyred and two others were critically injured. A house was also damaged.

## India

**India: Assam Chief Minister Dies of Cardiac Arrest**

*BK2204153396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Assam chief Minister, Mr. Hiteswar Saikia, died today at the all India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi. He was 61. Doctors who attended on him said that he died following a cardiac arreest. Mr. Saikia was ailing from lung infection and malfunctioning of the kidney. [passage omitted]

**India: Reported Ban on Kashmir Dailies Denied; Militants Surrender**

*BK2004132596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It has been clarified that the government has not put any ban on the publication of newspapers in Jammu and Kashmir. An official spokesman said that the dailies had only been apprised of the legal provisions and advised not to publish objectionable material so that the conducive atmosphere is created for the smooth conduct of free and fair elections in the state.

In Jammu and Kashmir, 51 militants belonging to a banned militant outfit surrendered to the security forces at Sogam yesterday. The arms which they handed over included 35 AK rifles, 12 radio transmitters, a large number of sniper rifles, and grenades. Later, talking to newsmen, the militants said that they decided to surrender after realizing that the gun culture was not going to serve any purpose. They said they will cooperate with the government in restoring normalcy in the valley and help in peaceful and smooth polling. They also expressed apprehension that the Pakistani ISI [Inter Service Intelligence] would send more trained militants and sophisticated weapons to the state to disturb the election process.

**India: Minister Discusses Foreign Relations**

*BK2204030296 Madras THE HINDU in English 20 Apr 96 p 9*

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] While readjusting to post-Cold War demands, India has worked out special ties with Iran, resurrected its relationship with Moscow and has broken fresh ground for a closer relationship with Himalayan neighbour China, says the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee.

"The first objective of our foreign policy was to adjust policy in the context of the post-Cold War (situation). In that context, it was necessary to redefine the role of the Non-Aligned Movement [NAM] and South-South Cooperation.

The basic thrust of our policy was to promote our national interests, to contribute our rank to peace and security and to cooperate with all countries and particularly with the developing world", Mr. Mukherjee told The Hindu.

The operationalisation of the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) and the hydropower accords with Nepal and Bhutan have helped improve relations with neighbours, Mr. Mukherjee said. "In the last five years, our priority was to improve relations with neighbours. In that connection we achieved some success by operationalising the SAPTA, by resolving the issues of the development of the Mahakali basin with Nepal and by launching the Tala power project with Bhutan."

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**Colombo Told To Show Restraint**

India encouraged Sri Lanka to exercise restraint while trying to defuse ethnic strife in the island State. "The ethnic issue of Sri Lanka is disturbing, but we have been able to convince the Sri Lankan government by supporting their peace initiatives and making it quite clear that the ethnic problems are to be resolved through dialogue and peaceful means between the parties concerned, within the framework of Sri Lanka's rule and Constitution.

We welcomed the peace initiative taken by the President (Mrs. Chandrika) Kumaratunga and the also the devolution package... Of course it is the various Tamil parties in Sri Lanka which have to respond and react, but Sri Lanka has appreciated our stand."

Pakistan's continued support to terrorism in Kashmir and its bid to internationalise the issue have stalled progress towards normalisation. "(We) initiated a dialogue with Pakistan, but we have not been able to make much progress. After January 1994, the official talks have not been restarted", he said.

**Forward Movement in Ties With China**

Last live years have seen progress in ties with China and Beijing's role as a supplier of military technology to Pakistan has not obstructed a "forward movement" on the Sino-Indian track.

"...substantial progress has taken place in the Sino-Indian relationship with the advent of the maintenance of peace and tranquility accord on the border. Not only (has it) defused tension in the border areas, but it has opened border trade and normalised it on three points.

(But)... in international relations, countries do not agree on all aspects. So far as arms and weapons supply are concerned, it is not only China, but Pakistan is on a buying spree for almost every part of the world... but just as the Brown Amendment should not affect our relations with the U.S., similarly, while expressing our concerns fully, we should not say, it is standing in the way of normalising and expanding our relationship. There would be certain problem areas. Keeping that in view, we have to build cooperation... (And) we are making steady progress there. We have made a forward movement", Mr. Mukherjee said.

Iran's strategic location on the periphery of Central Asia was a factor in building special ties between New Delhi and Tehran. But the friendship is not directed against any third country.

"We have improved our relationship substantially with Iran, after the visits of our Prime Minister [PM] and the visit of the Iranian President... When our PM went, the President came to receive him at the airport. Therefore, it definitely begets a special relationship. And this special relationship we consider necessary for improved relationship with Central Asia. Iran occupies a strategic position in this centre. For instance, India, Iran, Turkmenistan entered into a trilateral railway project agreement. The whole objective of this participation is to ensure the uninterrupted flow of goods and services through this route to India through Bandar Abbas and other Central Asian Republics. This is an area of our economic cooperation."

**Identical stands on Afghanistan**

According to Mr. Mukherjee, there was nothing "unusual" in the similar stands of India and Iran on Afghanistan. "Concern for the removal of external interference in Afghanistan, part of the U.N. norm was the basis of bringing India closer to several countries including Iran", Mr. Mukherjee said.

The External Affairs Minister declined to comment on the suspected U.S. backing to the Taleban militia battling the regime of the President, Mr. Borhanoddin Rabbani in Afghanistan. "I am not aware if there is any place for the Taleban in the U.S. strategy. As I do not know, I would not like to make a comment. But the fact remains that the U.S. has supported the U.N. peacekeeping effort in Afghanistan.

Taleban is the creation of Pakistan and we have made it quite clear to all concerned... we cannot shut our eyes to reality. It is the creation of Pakistan." **Ties with Russia Resurrected**

New Delhi-Moscow ties, ruptured briefly after the collapse of the Soviet Union have been resurrected. "There was a turning point — with the President, Mr. Boris Yeltsin's visit. Not only did we resolve the debt repayment problem, but it also cleared the way for special relationship between India and Russia.

It was followed by subsequent visits of our Prime Minister to Moscow, their Prime Minister to India and the establishment of an inter-governmental commission. And the latest visit of the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Primakov clearly demonstrated that our relationship has been brought back on track."

India's ties with South East Asia have been recently bolstered. New Delhi became the ASEAN's full dialogue partner, placing it on the inside track of decision making in the seven nation grouping. "The raising of our status from a sectoral dialogue partner to a full dialogue partner clearly demonstrates our closer interaction with the ASEAN", Mr. Mukherjee said.

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A new era of cooperation between India and the European Union has been inaugurated, Mr. Mukherjee said. "Our relationship with the European Union has witnessed a sea-change with the signing of the third generation cooperation agreement and institutionalisation of the relationship between the EU Troika and the Foreign Minister of India. The economic and political content of our relationship has expanded. India is the only developing country to have entered into a third generation cooperation agreement with the EU.

Economic reforms by India had laid the groundwork for deeper interaction with Washington, absorbing differences in some spheres. The NEP [new economic policy] created the ground that afforded the opportunity of having a deeper interaction with the U.S. Between July 1991 and December 31, 1995, 40 per cent of the foreign investment was accounted for by U.S. companies. Trade has almost doubled from $5.2 billions to $9.2 billions. On political issues also the situation has improved after the after the visit of our Prime Minister and my meeting with Secretary of State, Mr. Warren Christopher.

It is not that we agree on all issues. There are differences in approach on certain sectors, but at the same time vigorous efforts have been made to narrow down the area of differences. But where there are disagreements, each side understands the position of the other."

Responding to a question, Mr. Mukherjee denied that India had succumbed to U.S. arm twisting on the global security front. "That is absolutely not true. For instance we did not participate in the talks of indefinite extension of the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty]. We have taken positions in absolute conformity with our national interests. For instance, we did not consider that with the end of the Cold War, the relevance of the NAM has been lost."

**India: Commentary Criticizes U.S. for Releasing Arms to Pakistan**

*BK1904110396 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[Commentary by Arun Kumar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] China's reported admission that it sold Pakistan 5,000 special magnet rings that can be used to make highly enriched uranium required for nuclear weapons has provided yet another proof, if a proof was ever needed, of Beijing's willingness to help Islamabad's controversial nuclear program. But, regrettably, the Chinese admission seems to have caught the Americans on the wrong foot, for there has again been no concrete action beyond appropriate noises of concern at the Chinese shipment of magnets.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Warren Christopher, surprisingly continues to insist on a wait-and-see policy on the plea that the matter is very complex. The matter indeed is very complex, for sanctions against China under America's own Nuclear Proliferation Prevention Act could hurt its commercial interests with some $10 billion worth of deals going with China. In the event, Pakistan too has not only gone scot free but is about to receive $368 million worth of military equipment under the Brown Amendment in spite of its long record of distinct acquisition of nuclear weapons technology, ballistic missiles, and related nuclear materials.

As Indian external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, warned the other day the American decision would not only instigate the first arms race since the end of the Cold War, but would seriously affect peace and stability in the region besides diverting scarce resources away from developmental programs. While the Americans' decision has not come as a surprise to India, it is a matter of concern for New Delhi that the U.S. is bent upon pursuing this unwise course of action. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee found no basis for the American explanation that the supply of arms package would provide it with greater influence over Pakistan's nuclear weapons and missile program and thus stability in the region. This, he pointed out, was contrary to Pakistan's past record of repeatedly using U.S. supplied weapons against India. While doing so, Pakistan has proceeded without interruption with its nuclear weapons program even as it received U.S. economic and military aid conditional on halting such programs.

Chinese admission of sale of magnetic rings to Pakistan comes close on the heels of reports that Pakistan may be preparing to conduct its first underground nuclear explosion on the side of Chagai mountain in Balochistan and deportation of a Pakistani national by London for involvement in nuclear proliferation. The Chinese rings are apparently meant to replace old ones at Pakistan's uranium enrichment facility at Kahuta which can produce sufficient weapons grade material to make a number of nuclear bombs. The Pakistanis are also reported to be developing with Chinese help an ability to produce weapons grade plutonium as an alternative to their existing uranium facilities. The magnetic rings are only the latest piece of equipment supplied by China which has been aiding Pakistan's nuclear program since its very inception in the 1970's by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

At various times, U.S. intelligence reports have suggested that China had provided Pakistan with the latest test design of its fourth nuclear weapon which weighed less than a ton and could be carried by aircraft like the F-16's and Mirage-3 or 4 or a missile like the SS-4. Western reports also suggest that shortly after com-

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ing to power in 1988, Premier Benazir Bhutto visited China to finalize plans for testing the Pakistani bomb in China's Lop Nor test site. Despite such overwhelming evidence, the Americans have chosen to sidestep questions whether both the giver or the receiver of nuclear technology — in this case, China and Pakistan — would attract sanctions under their antiproliferation laws. With the United States either unwilling or unable to take action against either Pakistan or China, the world community at large must exert pressure on Washington not to let business take precedence over principles in the interest of world peace.

**India: U.S. Arms for Pakistan Seen as 'Coup de Grace' for Rao**

*BK2004140996 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 19 Apr 96 p 10*

[Editorial: "A Loaded U.S. Action"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] True to its billing as the sole surviving superpower, the US harbours no inhibitions in flexing its military and economic muscle to turn the wheels of electoral verdicts in different parts of the world decisively in its favour. The US President, Mr Bill Clinton, successfully did so to swing the electoral mood in Taiwan last month in Mr Lee Teng-Hui's favour by sending the Seventh Fleet near the Taiwan Straits. To shore up the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Shimon Peres' chances in the coming parliamentary elections in Israel, Mr Clinton attended an anti-terrorism summit in Egypt last month, and is currently demonstrating a pathological indifference to Israel's onslaught against Southern Lebanon. Again, he is visiting Moscow on Friday to rally support for the Russian President, Mr Boris Yeltsin, in the coming presidential elections in June. Now, just before the Indian parliamentary elections, the Clinton Administration has sent a strong message by clearing the Brown package for Pakistan. Though the Congress election manifesto boasts of Mr Narasimha Rao's "highly successful" visit to the US in 1994 in its Foreign Affairs section, the US has (or so it would like us to believe), by its latest action, delivered the proverbial coup de grace to Mr Narasimha Rao's crumbling citadel. This may have been necessitated by Mr Narasimha Rao's growing interest in cultivating ties with "rogue" Iran, in opting for the serial production of Prithvi missiles, in keeping the option open on Agni and by his defiance of the US line in the current CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] negotiations. What the US may not have taken adequately into account is that there is a national consensus on all of these issues and no party will change India's policy on such issues. Nor are Indian electoral outcomes decided by foreign policy issues.

The supply of US arms to Pakistan may not fundamentally alter the military balance in the subcontinent, but it thoroughly exposes the deficiencies of Indian diplomacy, which has been the hallmark of the Rao years. Despite the strong objection against the Chinese ring magnet sales to Pakistan in the American Press, the Indian diplomats could not get their act together. The Indian former ambassador to the US, Mr Siddhartha Shankar Ray, was feeling increasingly homesick when the elections were announced, and he was more than eager to hand over the baton to Mr Naresh Chandra, a novice in the corridors of power in Washington DC. The malaise afflicting the Indian embassy has reached such a point that the long-time India ally, Senator Larry Pressler, has been forced to appeal directly to the Indian community to help in his re-election rather than leaving it to India House to ensure, informally, of course, that such support is forthcoming.

**India: Editorial Views Consequences of U.S. Arms to Pakistan**

*BK2104145396 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 20 Apr 96 p 8*

[Editorial: "Fate Accompli"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] With the transfer of $368 million worth of US arms to Pakistan now virtually a fate accompli, the new arms race in the subcontinent India has frequently warned against is unavoidable. Although such an outcome has been on the cards ever since the Brown amendment went through the US Congress, no one should underestimate the costs and risks of the course of action India will be compelled to take for its security. It is not only a matter of finding answers at the level of military hardware to the equipment, some of it highly sophisticated, in the package being delivered to Islamabad. It is also a question of deciding what kind of wider defence policy responses the situation calls for. Preoccupied as they are with the elections all political parties must realise that one of the first tasks of the new Central Government will be to develop policies appropriate to India's security needs and the requirements of economic growth and development.

Washington's purpose, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott told Congress this week, as to influence Pakistan's nuclear policies and obtain its cooperation in combating terrorism and the narcotics trade. As is only too well known the presumption that arming Pakistan with conventional weapons would give it an incentive to abandon its nuclear weapons programme has been proved completely false over two decades. The second presumption that a democratic government in Pakistan

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would be better-placed to abandon the policies of the past — ranging from interference abroad to exporting terrorism to devoting a major share of resources to a military build-up — is also a continuing US fantasy. Benazir Bhutto's approaches on Kashmir and Afghanistan establish this clearly. If, nevertheless, Washington is determined to hang on to its illusions and was looking only for a measured response to Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weapons equipment from China, the answer surely would have been not to release military equipment and hold up economic aid but the reverse. The acquisition of new weaponry massages the egos of hard-liners in Pakistan and feeds their ambitions abroad. It falls to this country to prove a third US assumption false. India has long-term security goals and cannot be pressured into taking any steps which will slow down its achievement of those goals.

**India: Article Notes 'Fresh Threat' of Special 301 From U.S.**

*BK2104093696 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 19 Apr 96 p 1*

[Article by Anil Padmanabhan and Anujuli Bhargava: "Fresh Threat of Special 301"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is a US move to put India on the priority watch list under the Special 301 provisions. A final decision on this can be expected by the end of this month. The list is reviewed every April.

Highly placed diplomatic sources say it is possible that India may be put on this list to "alert the Indian government" and indirectly put pressure on it for concrete measures to protect intellectual property. The sources add that the US move could be aimed at pressuring the in-coming government to amend its patent and trademarks laws in accordance with the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement.

Putting a country on the a watch list is not violative of the erstwhile Gatt principles or the World Trade Organisation (WTO) norms. If, however, the US "invokes trade sanctions that adversely affect India's exports to the US", this would be considered a violation and can be taken up by India as a dispute at the WTO, explains government official.

The US has at virtually every forum been putting pressure on India to amend its patent laws. It has in the past used the provisions of the Special and Super 301 to force other countries to fall in line. While India had been placed on the priority list earlier, the US has so far not imposed trade sanctions against India.

Failure to amend the patents bill to allow acceptance of product patents in the pharmaceutical sector would have serious implications for India in terms of its obligations to the World Trade Organisation.

The TRIPS agreement requires that the patentability of drugs and chemicals should be put in place in 10 years' time. Further, developing countries have been given five years to bring things in line. What, however, has to be done immediately is that India accepts patent applications. For the purpose, the government of India had issued an ordinance which subsequently lapsed.

The government also proposed an amendment of the patents bill. The amended bill was passed by the Lok Sabha by a small majority. However, the bill was stalled in the Rajya Sabha.

A select committee of the Rajya Sabha has been set up to make a detailed study of the bill. With the dissolution of the Lok Sabha, the bill will lapse.

There has been strong political opposition to the proposed amendments. Industry ministry officials were taken to task by the select committee constituted by Parliament to suggest changes to the bill for permitting multinational companies to register applications for product patents.

It has been alleged that the government was succumbing to the pressures of American multinationals to register product patents in the country. The select committee members have been asking why the government was so keen to push through the bill in Parliament, especially when several of the 170 signatories to the Gatt agreement were yet to change their domestic laws.

**India: Editorial Views Threat of U.S. Trade Sanctions**

*BK2104112096 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 20 Apr 96 p 10*

[Editorial: "Differing Styles"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] While the two-way trade between India and the United States has never been as good as in the last two years, the two are once again trading charges on unfair trade practices. However, there is a difference in their individual styles. As a member of the World Trade Organisation and as a country committed to multilateral rules of the game in international trade, India has approached the WTO's dispute settlement body to seek redress for its grievances against US quotas on garment exports from India. India and other textile exporting developing countries have protested against the slow pace of opening up of the markets of the developed countries, particularly US's textile and garments market, and have also expressed unhappiness at the way the WTO's textile monitoring

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body (TMB) resolved disputes with the US. The US, on the other hand, is planning to initiate unilateral action against India as a warning against the slow progress of legislation concerning intellectual property protection. The US administration is unhappy that Parliament did not ratify the ordinance on patent protection and trademarks to bring it in line with the agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights, TRIPS. Therefore, it wants to place India once again on the 'Priority watch list' under the US trade law Special 301. A final decision, however, is expected only at the end of this month. Placing a WTO member country on a 'watch-list' is not in itself violative of WTO principles, but any follow-up trade sanctions will be.

That the US has never cared much for multilateral institutions and rules of the game, except when it has its way, is by now well known and adequately documented. The only multilateral institutions that the US cares about are the ones where its writ can run. So when the US did not get a WTO of its liking, it chose to step around it and deal bilaterally with countries with which it has had trade disputes. In some cases, as for instance the auto parts dispute with Japan, there was mutual agreement on dispute settlement outside the WTO. However, ideally it is the WTO which must settle disputes relating to non-adherence of its rules. Admittedly, there has been some delay in India implementing the provisions of the TRIPS agreement. However it is committed to do so. Indeed, India is not the only laggard since many other WTO members have not even taken the steps that it has already taken to implement the WTO accord. However, on the question of India's ratification of the WTO principles on intellectual property protection, the US has repeatedly insisted on going beyond the Uruguay Round agreement. The Clinton administration has sought a bilateral science and technology agreement which goes well beyond TRIPS. Placing India on Special 301 will go against the spirit of multilateralism. But then, in its desperation to please protectionist lobbies at home the Clinton administration has never shied away from showing its disdain for multilateralism.

**India: Intrigue Behind Purchase of Fighter Planes Viewed**

*BK2204024596 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 20 Apr 96 p 12*

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is no denying the fact that India has already given a political and diplomatic commitment to Moscow for the purchase of 40 pieces of Sukhoi Design Bureau's Su-30 aircraft re-modelled "as per requirements" in view of impending depletion of Indian Air Force [IAF] squadrons and futuristic needs vis-a-vis modernisation of fleets by Pakistan and China.

A formal announcement to this effect was to be made after the new Government took over the reigns sometime next month.

But what made Ministry of Defence (MoD) leak its top secret papers (CD 18 7/96 Copy no. 12/50) "soliciting Cabinet approval" for the procurement of the said aircraft along with associated equipment at a total cost (staggered over eight years) of Rs [rupees] 6,310 crore?

Was it a deliberate move aimed at nailing a powerful lobby in the Air Headquarters [HQ] working for the purchase of French Mirage-2000 5 flying machines? Or is it that important documents made their way to the Press from Air HQ (file no. S 9605311/3 ASR) with a motive to scuttle the MoD move suggesting that a "caretaker Government" had a clinched the Su-30 deal after the announcement of elections?

Whatever be the case, the note meant for "Cabinet's consideration" was misconstrued (or knowingly twisted) as approval by the Government to the Su-30 proposal resulting in uproar in the Political quarters. Irrespective of the fact as to which party — MoD or Air HQ — "released" the documents (duly signed by Defence Secretary K.A. Nambiar dated March 25, 1996) it only indicates to the divide on the choice of fighter aircraft between the South Block [Defense Ministry] and Vayu Bhawan [Air Force Headquarters].

The sad part of the story is that vested interests were allowed to play a role and that too rather dubiously. In what is looking like a war of interests between Russian Design Bureau and Dassault, the makers of Sukhoi-30 and Mirage-2000-5 respectively the two sides involved lobbyists — an NRI [nonresident Indian] group of London on one side and a corporate magnate on the other. That the serving and retired Air Force officers were actively involved on two fronts was certainly unfortunate.

Although intense prompting for the two products has been going on for over three months the undercurrents began to surface sometime in March when one of the parties concerned floated: "India was to go in for 34th generation Mirage-2000-5." Another news item went on to surest that New Delhi had already got 10 such machines while negotiation. The fact about some fighter bombers arriving in India were the replacements for Mirage-2000, already IAF's inventory. Of the two squadrons in service seven had met With accidents, while three others were rendered beyond repairs.

MoD all this while was working on the Sukhoi-30 deal, the ground work for which was done, as far as

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drawing of delivery schedule, terms and conditions were concerned during a recent defence, civil aviation and equipment exhibition in the National Capital organised by a local defence consultancy firm and co-hosted by the Russians.

It was Important for India that the Russians had shown willingness to renegotiate on Su-30. Although New Delhi was offered Su-30 in June 1994, and evaluations have been going through ever since, there was a general disagreement on pricing factor. In September last year the Russians made it dear that they wanted the deal on cash terms unless, of course, India was ready to pay over next six years in dollar terms. The prices too were jacked up by the Russian Design Bureau.

During this year's parleys Moscow had indicated to carry out modifications to the twin-seat long-range, heavy-load carrying air defence (AD) Su-30 K machine into a multi-role variant to be named Su-30 MK to meet the specific requirement of the IAF. The MoD felt that this was the cheapest option available since the Sukhoi had also agreed to keep upgrading the aircraft over the years and also integrate systems developed and produced in India for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).

On the direction of the MoD a joint IAF/DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) study team found the other multi-role option Mirage-2000-5 falling short of capabilities of Sukhoi in both long range and weapon load. Besides the price difference was quite a bit — 40 per cent cheaper in case of the Russian aircraft. The team recommended that the remodel led variant (Su-30 MK) be named as Su-30 (I) an the proposal of the MoD for Cabinet approval listed the delivery of three-phased variants pattern as:

i) eight Su-30 K within 12 months of signing the deal;

ii) Ten Su-30 (I) phase-I within 18 months of delivery of Su-30 K;

iii) 12 Su-30 phase-II within 18 months of delivery of Phase-I;

iv) Ten Su-30 Phase-III (final version) within one year of the delivery of Phase-II machine;

v) upgrading of Su-30 Phase-I in India along with the delivery of second lot of Phase-III;

vi) upgrade of Su-30 K in Russia within one year of the last delivery of Phase-III;

vii) Upgrade of Su-30 (I) phase-II in Russia within one year of the delivery of Phase-III.

It is believed that Air HQ was not thoroughly impressed with the proposal of buying Su-30. It was in this context that Chief of the Air Staff reported to have written to the Prime Minister to put a hold on the deal till the elections were through. The very fact that two of Air Chief staff officers/advisers have been Mirage-2000 pilots is being given as one of the reasons by the MoD sources that Air HQ is more inclined towards the French bomber.

For the average IAF fighter pilot it does not matter which machine India goes for as long as the decision is taken early in the wake of 350 MiG-21 due for phasing out over the next three and a half year.

"Our need is multi-role aircraft which one it is the Government is to decide, keeping the resources at disposal in mind and in the best interest of the IAF," said a senior pilot who was concerned about increasing number of accidents in recent months (13 in less than 90 days, three being fatal).

He made no bones in admitting that morale of the IAF pilots was very low, both the accidents and recent regulations of cutting down the annual leave having something to do with it. Other grey area, he said was frequency of transfers and lack of suitable accommodation. "By the time you get accommodation at one station, you are already due to move to next location," he quipped.

**India: BJP Urges Sharma To Intervene in Russian Aircraft Deal**

*BK2204160596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] delegation today submitted a memorandum to the president, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, urging him to stop the government from reportedly going ahead with the purchase of fighter aircraft from Russia. The delegation led by Mr. K.R. Malkani said that the clearance for the acquisition of the aircraft has been hastily done while the election process is on.

**India: Panthers Party To Work for Solution of Kashmir Issue**

*BK2304052496 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The election manifesto of the Panthers Party says the party would strive for a lasting solution to the Jammu and Kashmir issue. The manifesto was released by the party president, Professor Bhim Singh, in New Delhi today. It calls for early assembly elections in the state. The manifesto says that the party stands for a dialogue between elected representatives of the state and a parliamentary committee consisting of representatives of all parties to solve the Kashmir problem.

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**India: BJP Leader Promises To Build Nuclear Arms, Missiles**

*BK2104144496 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[Speech by Atal Bhari Vajpayee, leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party; place and date not given; from the "Election Broadcast" program—recorded]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dear Friends: For the first time, there is a national alternative to the Congress. The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has emerged as a natural choice to replace the present government. We are contesting this election with a full confidence of forming the next government because we know you that will repose your faith in my party. India today needs a government which is caring, fair, and transparent. More than anything else, India needs a government which will protect the nation's interests and therefore the interests of the people. My government's emphasis will naturally be on tackling problems like galloping prices, poverty, social unrest, and terrorism which has severely affected the security scenario.

It will be our abundant duty to immediately strengthen the nation's security. We believe that Indian diplomacy should be conducted in tune with India's position as a strong power and major player in the world arena. We believe in partnership with everyone, but we reject the very thought of patronage by anybody. Unlike the present Congress regime, the BJP will not allow any foreign power or any neighboring country to interfere in India's internal affairs.

The BJP stands committed to a nuclear-free world, but it rejects nuclear apartheid. My government will not agree to any discriminatory treaty like CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty]. In fact, my government will exercise the option to induct the nuclear weapons as a deterrent. My government will also deploy both Agni and Prithvi range of missiles. India shall no longer be vulnerable to external aggression. India needs to regain its lost pride and the BJP alone can undertake the task of leading a reinvigorated, proud India to its rightful place in the comity of nations.

Let us join hands and work together to restore India's lost pride and dignity, which had been severely compromised by the Congress. I seek you support in this noble mission.

Vande matram [I salute the motherland]!

**India: Editorial Urges Using CTBT To Counter U.S. Arms to Pakistan**

*BK2304052696 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 22 Apr 96 p 11*

[Editorial: "Unfriendly Waiver"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There will be few rational souls in India who will be surprised by the Clinton Administration's notification to the US Congress clearing the supply of arms to Pakistan in the next few weeks. The Presidency bent backwards to compromise American nuclear proliferation laws to create a precedent to give military aid to a country on the fictitious plea of winning back an ally. Washington says it is a one-time waiver of the Pressler Amendment under which military aid to Pakistan was suspended in 1990 because the US President could not certify that country did not have a nuclear weapons programme. India is familiar with American assurances on weapons supplied to Pakistan. All the American arms which were supposed to have been meant for containing the Communist threat from the Soviet Union and China were used against India. The new arms also will be used against India, and people in this country cannot but see it as a deliberately-pursued unfriendly American policy towards India.

If there is no American departure from that perception, it is because being a friend of the Russians was not India's only sin. The US is still not reconciled with an India which has a mind of its own seen transparently during Mrs Indira Gandhi's time, and when Mr Rajiv Gandhi, as the backseat driver of a surrogate Chandrashekhar government, criticised the Prime Minister for permitting US military aircraft on way to Iraq to refuel in Bombay without consultations with him. Mr Pranab Mukherjee's statement criticising US arms supply to Pakistan under the Hank Brown amendment would appear to have been made more for form's sake, to obviate the criticism that New Delhi has failed to assert itself on security matters under US pressure.

The caretaker Rao government could perhaps take no policy initiatives in foreign affairs. But parties in the poll fray should realise that they will get little time to respond to international pressures on security and foreign policy issues after the election. These will come sugar-coated with promises of economic cooperation and investment. Globally, an impression has gone round that India's next government would be weak and amenable to pressure. Never in the past has economic and security sovereignty been more critical for an Indian government than it will be in the coming months. The Hank Brown amendment is a timely warning, if not lethal in content. But to neutralise its impact, and of American unresponsiveness to Indian susceptibilities,

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Mr Mukherjee should declare that India has made no concessions on CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] or fissile materials cut-off programmes.

## Iran

### Iran: Qom Friday Prayer Sermon on Lebanon Situation, Turkish Pact

*LD2104120196 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1340 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[Second Friday prayer sermon by senior clergyman Ayatollah 'Abdollah Javadi-Amoli, member of the Assembly of Experts and the Guardian Council, in Qom on 19 April — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Now let us turn to events abroad. For over one week now the fighter planes of savage and bloody Israel have targeted the deprived and helpless people of Lebanon. What has the world done in the face of this evil? You have seen that the United Nations has neither issued a resolution, nor condemned anyone, nor cut off the hand of the oppressor, nor given a helping hand to the helpless. It has done nothing.

America did two base things that it has done before. It supported the oppressor and suppressed the oppressed. [Crowd chants: "Death to America," "Death to Israel."]

This criminal — a wolf in disguise — has, in the first instance, supported Israel and continues to support it. Second, it labels as terrorist the admirable Muslims and Hizballah of Lebanon whose only crime is to defend their Islamic pride and Islamic homeland. [passage omitted]

You say how they could not ultimately put out the defensive fire of Lebanon's Hizballah. [passage omitted] The Koran states that every time this renegade Jew lit the fire of war, God himself put it out. [passage omitted] If Israel faces the helpless people of Lebanon with its fighter-bombers, what does it face God with? It was God who personally put out this fire. For eight years the fire of war was waged by the world against Iran. Who is more truthful than God? This was our experience of eight years of war. The worthy and Hizballah brothers of Lebanon should be aware — and they are — that this Koranic verse is about the Israelis specifically, and about others in general; [passage omitted] Every time they light the fire of war, God puts it out.

The worthy Muslim brothers of Turkey will never allow Turkey's statesmen to sign this treacherous military pact and permit Israel's fighter planes to fly over Muslim Turkey's airspace. They will pollute and drag the region into danger. The region's Muslims will never allow such an agreement to be implemented in practice and the same Koranic verse applies to this situation.

May God Almighty protect from every harm the Islamic system and Muslims all over the world under the shadow of the guardianship of the Imam of the Age — may our souls be sacrificed for him. Save the Muslims of Lebanon from barbaric Israel; awaken the Muslims of Turkey; return Israel's danger from the region onto Israel itself. [passage omitted]

### Iran: Outcome of Velayati's Morocco Visit Viewed

*NC2304081596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] In continuation of the efforts to halt the aggressions by the Zionist regime against Lebanon, our Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati arrived in Morocco on Monday [22 April] night. During his stay there, the Islamic Republic's foreign minister met with the Moroccan king and prime minister.

Velayati handed a message from our President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the Moroccan king, and held talks with Moroccan officials with whom he examined the two countries' relations and the situation in Lebanon and the latest developments there. He called on the Moroccan officials to play an active part in defending the oppressed Lebanese people and to work toward the convening of an extraordinary session to study the aggressions by the Zionist regime.

Our foreign minister had previously sent a letter to the Moroccan king, asking for the convening of an extraordinary session of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC]. Morocco is currently chairman of the OIC. If the extraordinary session is held and if Islamic countries adopt a stand within the framework of this organization, they can coordinate with each other and confront the Israeli aggressions.

The active role played by the OIC in the Bosnian crisis, which became possible after the Islamic Republic's efforts showed that if this organization takes the political initiative and plays a role, it can be very effective in vindicating the rights of the Islamic countries on the international level.

The impact that the Zionist regime's aggressive raids on Lebanon and the savage massacre of the defenseless Lebanese people had on world opinion paved the way for general opposition to the regime. The Zionist regime's acts have helped to form a basis for the further

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closeness of Islamic countries and for their efforts to confront Tel Aviv's aggressions. It is in view of this that the OIC—as the organization chosen by the Islamic countries—can bring the views of the Islamic countries as close to each other as possible and prepare the way for coordinated efforts.

In his meeting with Dr. Velayati, the Moroccan king expressed support for active efforts to solve the Lebanese crisis. He underlined the significance that his country attaches to Palestinian and Lebanese problems and said that the Islamic Republic's proposal will be examined by the OIC secretariat.

Dr. Velayati returned to Syria after his brief visit to Morocco. His return to Damascus is considered by observers to be a sign of the positive outcome of the Iranian delegation's discussions with Moroccan officials on the convening of the OIC conference.

**Iran: Further on Velayati's Talks in Morocco, Return to Syria**

*LD2304103996 Tehran IRNA in English 0746 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Fes, April 23, IRNA — Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, who was here in continuation of efforts to settle the Lebanese crisis, left Maghreb Tuesday [23 April] morning for Damascus, Syria. Heading a political delegation, Velayati arrived in Maghreb at noon Monday. During his stay, he met with senior officials, including King Hassan the second.

Following the Zionist aggression on Lebanon, Velayati embarked on visits to Turkey, Maghreb and Syria. Prior to his departure from Maghreb, the Iranian foreign minister met with King Hassan Monday evening and delivered President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's message.

The latest diplomatic efforts made in Damascus and the need to activate the organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) were discussed during the meeting. Referring to the Zionist atrocities against the defenseless people of Lebanon, Velayati stated that calling for an special session of the OIC foreign ministers could be very effective in solving the Lebanese problem. Maghreb is the current rotating chairman of the OIC.

Welcoming President Rafsanjani's message, King Hassan said that his country attaches importance to the Palestinian issue.

Meanwhile, in another meeting here last night with Maghrebi Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdellatif Filali, the two officials discussed and assessed the Israeli aggression on Lebanon and the critical situation in that country.

The two officials also underlined the need to further promote Tehran-Rabat cooperation.

**Iran: Tehran-Ankara Ties at 'Lowest Level' in 17 Years**

*LD1904203896 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 16 Apr 96 p 2*

[Article by Amin Sabuni]

[FBIS Translated Text] Less than four months ago Turkish President Suleyman Demirel told a senior Iranian official that his country "would not allow any agent to weaken" its growing relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. As the two Muslim nations were drawing the proper conclusions from Mr. Demirel's positive statements, the news about Israeli-Turkish military cooperation came like a major quake strong enough to plunge Tehran-Ankara ties to their lowest level in 17 years.

Parallel to this, statements by some segments of the Turkish political establishment that Iran was fanning the flames of "Islamic fundamentalism" in that country only added insult to injury.

Then, last week the two major players in this part of the world each expelled four diplomats from the other side. Four Turkish diplomats based in Tabriz, Tehran and Orumiyeh were reportedly identified as espionage agents and told to leave.

Far too many observers of Irano-Turkish relations maintain that the leadership in both countries since the early 1980s up till now, has done a good job of keeping normal and working ties away from outside influence. Similarly it is strongly emphasized that Turkey's friendship with Islamic Iran has more often than not benefited the former, not to mention more than eight years of lucrative economic and trade ties Ankara enjoyed during the Iraqi- imposed war years.

True, it is a bit difficult to pin point a time when the two neighbours had excellent political cooperation. But it is also impossible to find out when (except last week) our two countries' relations were so fragile as to crumble.

Muslim nations in general and Iran in particular have valid reasons to openly and officially protest Turkey's provocative military accord with the Zionist regime. Israel is as much an occupying power and lawless state today as it was before forging the military pact with Ankara, of course with direct U.S. recommendation.

Israel is Iran's sworn enemy and Zionist rulers have never concealed the fact that it is their genuine desire to see the Islamic Republic disappear. Now Mr. Demirel's Turkey has agreed to allow Israeli pilots to use Turkish air space for "training missions" and also use its bases.

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Iran has a long border with Turkey and such brands of military understandings can only be condemned in the strongest terms. Had Ankara bothered to intellectually examine Israel's four decades plus track record of military occupation, aggression against civilians and outright lawlessness, it would not have hesitated to politely but firmly turn down Washington's "request" to enter into a military agreement with the Qods occupying regime. Given the nature of Israel's regional relations and dangerous ambitions, it would seem that Ankara has fallen into a trap it will find difficult to extricate itself from.

**Iran: First Kyrgyz Ambassador Submits Credentials to Velayati**

*LD2104103296 Tehran IRNA in English 1811 GMT 18 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA — Kyrgyz first ambassador to Tehran, Asionov Mokon [name as received], on Thursday [18 April] submitted his credentials to Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Mokon pointed out that though the two nations were kept far from each other for a prolonged period of time, the historical bonds between the two nations survived the onslaught, and were revived in the wake of the independence of Kyrgyzstan.

He thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for giving a 'de jure' recognition to Kyrgyzstan as a fully fledged independence nation.

Mokon further voiced Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev's willingness in the promotion of mutual ties between the two countries.

Velayati referred to the longstanding cultural ties between Iran and Kyrgyzstan and deducing that there exist no border between the two nations in terms of common cultural and religious beliefs.

The Iranian foreign minister stated that the formation of Tehran-Bishkek joint economic commission in Bishkek, which coincided with the official visit to Tehran of Kyrgyz foreign minister, is a clear indication of the seriousness of relations between the two countries.

He hoped that bilateral ties in political, economic and cultural areas and regional cooperation within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) would further see a constructive growth.

**Iran: Rafsanjani Meets Qatari Health Minister**

*LD2104163996 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Qatari Health Minister 'Ali Sa'id al-Khayarin.

The minister conveyed the best wishes of his country's amir and said that the Qatari people and government attached special respect to Iran. They consider Iran as one of their good friends in the region. He added that the Qatari government was in favor of an ever-increasing level of ties with Iran in all spheres.

The minister presented a report about his country's medical and health services, and called for Iran's assistance in accepting Qatari's medical students [in Iran's universities] and benefiting from Iran's resources in medical treatment and the pharmaceutical industry.

In view of Iran's efforts to expand ties and cooperate with the neighboring countries in the Persian Gulf region, Rafsanjani said: Taking into account the common interests of the world of Islam, Iran is following a policy of consolidating ties, friendship, and unity with the Islamic countries. It hopes that the other Islamic countries, especially those in the sensitive and strategic region of the Persian Gulf, will also move on the basis of these interests.

The president referred to Iran's vast resources to help the neighboring countries and added: Iran produces around 95 percent of its pharmaceutical requirements internally, therefore, it can meet Qatar's pharmaceutical requirements with a very high standard and at a cost much lower then other pharmaceutical producing countries.

**Iran: Minister Signs Letter of Understanding With New Zealand**

*LD2104100196 Tehran IRNA in English 0931 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 21, IRNA — Iran and New Zealand at the end of the sixth session of the joint Iran-New Zealand Economic Commission, signed a letter of understanding on expansion of cooperation in trade, industry and agriculture, here Sunday [21 April].

According to the Ministry of Construction Jihad, the letter was signed by the Iranian Minister of Construction Jihad, Gholam Reza Foruzesh, and the New Zealand Minister of Commerce, Philip Burdon.

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Based on the document, the two countries are to forge closer cooperation in forestation and exchange of meat processing technology.

The two sides also agreed to boost cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries by paving the way for their participation in the trade fairs to be held in Iran and New Zealand.

Cooperation in roads and transportation, transit of New Zealand goods to the Central Asian states via Iran and also providing facilities for the New Zealand investors in the Iranian free trade zones were among the other issues discussed during the sixth economic joint commission.

The two sides expressed satisfaction over further expansion of bilateral trade relations, particularly, in dairy products.

The two countries also expressed willingness to have closer cooperation in banking, post, telecommunication, power and manpower training.

**Iran: Russian Technology Exhibition Opens in Tehran**

*LD2104123896 Tehran IRNA in English*
*1123 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA — An exhibition of the latest technological products of Russia opened on Saturday [20 April] at the Tehran international exhibition grounds.

Minister of higher education and culture, Mohammad Reza Hashemi-Golpayegani said at the opening ceremony that at present Iran enjoys proper grounds for absorbing foreign technology. He added that the exhibit could lead to better cooperation in the field of technology between the two countries.

Russian deputy minister of science and technology, Jumayev [name as received], in his speech at the inaugural ceremony of the 5-day exhibit, said that the equipment on display was of superior quality and among the most modern technological products required in today's world.

Attaching great importance to the event in Tehran, he hoped to witness further expansion of technological cooperation between the two countries including the use by Iran of sophisticated Russian equipment.

**Iran: Yemeni Envoy—Sanaa Willing to Expand Ties With Tehran**

*LD2204153696 Tehran IRNA in English*
*1435 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 22, IRNA — The Yemeni ambassador to Tehran voiced his country's willingness to further promote relations with Iran in cultural, political and economic fields while terming Tehran-Sanaa ties as "excellent".

Ambassador 'Abdallah 'Ali al-Razi told IRNA that the bilateral relations are rooted in history and that both countries are determined to expand ties to the benefit of the two nations.

He referred to constant reciprocal visits to Iran and Yemen by the officials of the two countries and said a number of agreements have so far been signed.

The Yemeni diplomat, who speaks Persian fluently, added that the Yemeni people are very much interested in Iranian manufactured products which have been displayed in various exhibitions held already in his country.

Touching on trade facilities, Al-Razi termed the Mashhad-Sarakhs- Tajan railway as a giant project which would undoubtedly play a significant role in economic development and promoting friendship among the regional nations.

Referring to the unique strategic position of Iran, he noted that the said the railway project will greatly contribute to the establishment of links among regional countries, notably Persian Gulf Arab states, Central Asian countries and Caucasus.

Turning to the savage Zionist aggressions against Lebanese civilians in Lebanon, the ambassador said that Yemen condemns those atrocious crimes and calls for an immediate end to the ferocious onslaught.

He underlined that the Yemeni people and government are steadfast in their support for their Lebanese brethren.

**Iran: Foreign Ministry Denies Taleban Delegation To Arrive**

*LD2304105096 Tehran IRNA in English*
*0721 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA — No Taleban delegation is supposed to arrive here, a Foreign Ministry official said here Tuesday [23 April]. Mowlawi Wakil Ahmad, a member of the central council of Taleban, had said Monday that an official delegation from his group was to leave for Tehran to discuss with Iranian officials.

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The Foreign Ministry official added that in response to repeated requests of the governor of Herat for paying a visit to Iran, the visit of Herat governor's delegation for holding talks with regional officials was accepted. The delegation arrived in Mashhad in the northeastern province of Khorasan Monday and started discussions with provincial officials.

Talks with the Taleban group are conducted through Iran's missions in Islamabad, Peshawar and Herat, the Foreign Ministry official said.

**Iran: Velayati Calls for OIC Meeting on Israeli Aggression**

*LD1904141196 Tehran IRNA in English 1302 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Abu Dhabi, April 19, IRNA — Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, in another message sent to the secretary of Organization of Islamic Countries [Conference] (OIC) called for speedy meeting of the emergency session of the foreign ministers of the member countries to study the aggressions of the Zionist regime. The message was handed over to the secretary of the organization by Iran's ambassador to Abu Dhabi and permanent representative to the organization.

This was the second message of Iran's foreign minister to the organization's secretary, Hamid Algabid, on Thursday [18 April].

In the first message, Velayati called on al-Gabid to take measures for rendering assistance to the Lebanese Muslim people, and for holding the emergency meeting of the foreign minsiters of Islamic countries.

Iran's foreign minister in his second message hinted at the brutal massacre of the inhabitants of the Lebanese village of Qana by the Zionist Army and said the Islamic Republic of Iran underlines the necessity for speeding up of the meeting of foreign ministers of Islamic countries to adopt coordinated stands and concerted measures.

Velayati added that the savage killings of tens of innocent and defenseless children and women in Lebanon represents the barbaric temper of the occupier Zionists.

Army of the Qods occupying regime on Thursday bombarded a UN shelter camp at Qana (a rural area in South Lebanon) under the protection of Fijian UN peace keeping forces, where innocent and defenseless women and children had taken shelter. Over 100 civilians were martyred in this senseless but barbaric attack of the Zionist forces.

OIC's secretary general upon taking Velayati's second message underscored the need for coordination among Islamic countries and giving flip to international moves in this respect. He will embark on necessary efforts in this respect as of today, Friday.

**Iran: Khamene'i Cables Lebanese Hizballah's Nasrallah**

*NC2004193996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Apr 96*

["Text" of cable sent by Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution in Iran, to Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah in Lebanon; date not given — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate, struggling scholar Hojjat-ol-Eslam Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, may his glory live on: Peace be upon you as you stand patient.

The recent bloody acts in Lebanon carried out by the Zionist criminal usurpists and blood suckers with explicit support from the arrogant, tyrannical U.S. Government, filled me, all the Iranian people, and the government of the Islamic Republic with profound sorrow.

This great disaster whose victims were children, women, and civilian men proved the level to which the government usurping Palestine has reached. Peoples' lives and property and nations' independence are transgressed with utter rudeness without any moral restraint or international obligation.

By continuing its aggression against Arab and Islamic territories, it took advantage of the silence of some bargaining Arab countries. In this great trial, the people and government in Lebanon demonstrated courage and zeal by holding fast in the face of and not surrendering to this malicious enemy.

This grand stand is worthy of respect and appreciation. Hizballah's sacrificing heroes, who are known for defending Lebanon and its people, recorded the greatest epics in these great events.

O dear ones: Honor in this world and in the world hereafter is represented by your stand in the face of aggressors, preservation of lives and property, and protection of faith and independence. Strike them until they regret the aggression they committed.

These Zionists grow more arrogant and brutal the more they see leniency, a fact experienced by the Palestinian people and their neighbors. Rely on God and seek his help and be patient over your affliction until Almighty God endows you with victory.

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Today, you are standing in the first trench to defend Islamic land in the face of the aggressors. All Muslims worldwide and all Islamic countries must rush to defend Lebanon and its government and people.

I hope that Islamic nations and states will realize this serious duty of theirs. I implore Almighty God to grant you, Hizballah heroes, and the Lebanese people patience and victory, to grant the highest degrees for the martyrs of these events and reward their families. Peace be upon you and all of God's faithful people. [signed] Friday, the 30th of holy Dhu al-Qi'dah 1416 Hegira. 'Ali Hoseyni Khamene'i.

**Iran: Paper Accuses Arab Regimes of Complicity With U.S. Aims**

*LD2104212596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 15 Apr 96 p 16*

[Unattributed article: "Time Is Against Frightened Arab Regimes"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The moving scenes of the massacre of innocent people of Lebanon by the executioners of the Zionist regime are repeated every minute. The Zionists' war machine has targeted the heart of Lebanon and stepped up the destruction and slaughter resulting from the attacks. [passage omitted]

The prime minister of the Zionist regime has stressed that the crimes would continue, that no part of Lebanon would be safe from the attacks of the Zionist forces, that Israel would not allow Lebanon to see peace and calm, and that it would continue its attacks on the heart of Lebanon. Under such circumstances [Warren] Christopher, the spiteful U.S. secretary of state, has embarked on justifying Israel's crimes. He said Israel has the right to do anything to achieve its goals.

Thus, by declaring their support for the savage massacre, America and the Zionists have clearly stated their stand in respect of the slaughter of the innocent people of Lebanon. But why are the Arab world and the world of Islam deathly quiet? Why do the Arabs continue their deathly silence in the face of so much injustice and shameful crimes?

Of course, no-one expects the Arab regimes to react for the sake of Islamic honor. For they have shown that their spite and enmity towards innocent Muslims are far greater than those of the enemies of Islam and that, if arrogance and the Zionists kill Muslims for the sake of their interests, reactionary Arabs kill Arab nations merely to please arrogance and curry favor with the Zionists. It is very shameful that the spite of reactionary Arabs towards Muslims is the biggest weapons for arrogance in its fight against Islam. [passage omitted]

The Zionists have gradually penetrated the very fabric of Arab regimes to the extent that they have even taken away the right of Arab regimes to express their verbal protest against the massacre of the Arab nations.

The Cairo regime, which has committed so much treason in order to attract the support of the Zionists and became host to the shameful Sharm al-Shaykh conference, is now preferring to remain silent against the occupiers and is calling on the Lebanese people and government to exercise restrain and confront anti-occupation movement. [Yasir] 'Arafat, the mercenary face of Israel, who has forced all his men to spy for Israel in order to attract favorable opinion from the occupiers, is now also preferring to take the side of the criminals.

The shaykhs of al-Azhar, who had instructions yesterday to question jihad against the savage occupiers to help Israel, are now submerged into a deadly sleep and do not consider it in their interest to express opinions about condemning the crimes of the occupiers against the world Muslims.

The collaboration of king of Jordan with America and the deployment of the U.S. warplanes on that country's soil will contribute to the joint aims of the United States and Israel in order to frighten Arabs and possibly to implement more serious program.

It is sad but true that today Christopher, Shim'on Peres, the mufti of al-Azhar, leaders of intimidated Arab regimes, and all those treacherous personalities, who did not have the courage to confront Israel and preferred spying and offering their services to Israel than struggling against the occupiers, each and every one of them has entered the fray against the anti-occupation movement. Each one, according to their ability, capacity and power, is commissioned to inflict a blow on the innocent people of Lebanon and to justify it.

What is happening today in Lebanon is the outcome of the Sharm al-Shaykh conference. What a suitable name [sharm in Persian means shame] which has brought shame to all Arab Shaykhs. Qatar and Oman and all those regimes which overtly and covertly kissed the hands of the occupiers now share the responsibility for the blood of Lebanese people and must answer.

By allowing the Israeli warplanes to fly over its Islamic territory, Turkey is also a party to the blood of nations in the region and is considered an accomplice to Israel war crimes.

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An end should be put to all that treachery, crime, killing and shameless support. It is only the nations who can put an end to this disgraceful game and until they take action, this game against the nations will continue. The land must be shaken under the foot of occupiers.

The treacherous and criminal people must feel that the time is against them. Anyone who does not condemn these crimes and treacheries and does not take action against them, are surely in the enemy camp even if they wear the deceptive mask of friendship towards Muslim nations. Everyone should make their position clear. Hypocritical approach and double standard speeches will not solve anything. Today is the day of action and the moment of decision has arrived.

**Iran Calls On UN To Mediate in Halting 'Zionist Crime'**

*LD1904133096 Tehran IRNA in English 1144 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Paris, April 19, IRNA — Iran's Ambassador to Paris Hamid Reza Asefi conferred with Director general of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Federico Mayor Zaragoza in Paris on Thursday [18 April].

At the meeting, Asefi submitted a message from Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati to Mayor, in which the latter had been invited to attend the inaugural ceremony of Mashhad-Sarakhs railway.

Referring to the latest crimes committed by the Zionist regime in launching attack on UN refugee headquarters in Southern Lebanon and in massacring children and the elderly, Asefi said that certain countries' support for the Zionist regime and international community's indifference had transformed Israel not only as a highly stubborn regime determined to continue committing atrocious crimes to achieve its dream but also into the greatest terrorist regime of the world.

He called for the UN's mediation in order to stop Zionist crime machine.

**Iran: Nateq-Nuri Assails Arab 'Silence' on 'Zionist Crimes'**

*LD2104140696 Tehran IRNA in English 1106 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 21, IRNA — Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri here Sunday [21 April] terming the Zionist crimes in southern Lebanon as regretful, denounced the barbaric attacks and silence of international bodies as well as of Islamic and Arab countries.

Speaking at the open session of the Majles, Nateq-Nuri said that the U.S. and international bodies have very easily overlooked and ignored the Zionist crimes.

The most deplorable of all is the silence of Arab countries and rulers of Islamic countries. "If they are Muslims, human beings and Arabs they should stand against these tragedies and crimes and voice their protest," he said.

The Majles speaker added that the Zionist regime's attacks on southern Lebanon are aimed at forcing the Lebanese Hizballah to kneel down and to weaken the support of the Lebanese Government and people for these combatants.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri stressed that despite all these plots, not only the popularity of Hizballah has not suffered but the backing given to it by the government and people of Lebanon have increased.

**Iran: Velayati Discusses Peace Efforts for Lebanon**

*LD2104202996 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, in Syria, with unidentified announcer in Tehran studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] As I have mentioned in the news headlines, diplomatic efforts are acquiring broader dimensions to end the Zionist attacks on Lebanon. Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati, who is visiting Damascus for the same reason, is now in the Syrian television studio and would like to explain to you, dear listeners, the results of the current diplomatic efforts.

Mr Velayati. Greetings. Good evening.

[Velayati] Greetings to you. I too greet you and the dear audience of the Vision [television] of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Good evening.

[Announcer] Thank you very much for accepting our invitation. Please tell us about the diplomatic efforts to end the attacks by the Zionist regime's army on Lebanon. How do you see the prospects for these efforts?

[Velayati] As you know, since the beginning of Israel's savage offensive against the defenseless and innocent people of Lebanon, the Islamic Republic of Iran took a stance. According to our information, Iran was the first country which had a clear policy against this offensive. And immediately, that is within a short period, we dispatched a high-ranking delegation to Syria and Lebanon. We began our diplomatic efforts and dispatched humanitarian aid. Shortly after the dispatch

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of the delegation, I, along with a number of our colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, embarked on a new stage of efforts. We went to Turkey and from Turkey we went to Syria.

One of the purposes of our visit to Turkey, was, in a way, related to the recent developments in the region. Immediately after arriving in Damascus, we began our efforts. Our first meeting lasted up to 0300, that is 0300 on Saturday [20 April] morning. After that we continued other meetings with the parties concerned in Damascus. So far we have had over 10 meetings. We met the foreign ministers of Russia, France, and Syria, and the Syrian president and vice president. Various ministers and officials who are in Damascus are also still continuing their bilateral and multilateral meetings. A number of ministers have left Damascus. We will leave Damascus for Morocco tomorrow morning in our role as the current chairman of the Islamic Conference Organization.

If we do not achieve our ultimate aim by Tuesday, we will return to Damascus. I must say that intensive efforts are taking place in Damascus in order to enable us, with the attention of the countries which have good intentions in this regard, to prevent Israel's further offensives against the innocent people of Lebanon.

[Announcer] Mr. Velayati, thank you very much. My next question is, what current plans are there to bring to an end the crisis resulting from the Zionist regime's attacks, and what is your excellency's view and that of other countries involved in the diplomatic effort in the matter?

[Velayati] Specifically, the U.S. and French Governments have put forward two plans. America's plan was rejected outright by the countries which were involved in the matter in any way — the Islamic Republic of Iran, Russia, France, the European Union, Syria and Lebanon. Matters reached a stage where the Americans withdrew their initial plan. The U.S. secretary of state, who was in Damascus, said to the Syrian foreign minister that he would return to Syria with a new plan.

However, most of the people who are active in Syria, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, tend to favor the French plan. Although France's plan needs more defending, it is closer to reality and is more reasonable.

Our talks are continuing with the French and Syrian authorities and other involved parties and Sayid Hasan Nasrallah, the honorable Hizballah secretary general, to see how we could prepare an amended plan, integrated with some proposals by friendly countries, that have close ties with us, and also Hizballah, so that, God willing, this time there would be a greater guarantee for the security of the people of southern Lebanon.

That indirect plan would in fact bring more security for the Lebanese people than that which we agreed on in June 1993. At that time, too, Syria and Iran played a major role in preparing the plan, and during that period the inhabitants of southern Lebanon enjoyed relatively more peace. Although I should say that, according to documents in possession of Hizballah, Israel has violated that plan more than 300 times.

[Announcer] Thank you very much. Please allow me to put to you the final question. In today's news it was reported that Shim'on Peres, the Zionist regime's prime minister, has announced that he would not accept any other plan except the U.S. plan from among the plans presented by various countries. Political circles interpreted Shim'on Peres' statement as such that Israel might continue its attacks on Lebanon. What is your excellency's view on the issue?

[Velayati] Israel will continue its air, land, and naval attacks on south Lebanon with or without a plan. Nothing else is expected from Israel but this. It is not clear, however, which American plan is this person supporting. If he means the first U.S. plan, then, the Americans themselves do not insist on their first plan anymore. They are after another plan.

Anyway, what is considered by the most of the activists in the Lebanon's crisis, is the fact that the French proposal is closer to the reality and justice and fairness. I do not, however, say that it is completely ideal. Maybe we will ultimately achieve an amended plan in which the opinions of the majority of parties who directly or indirectly concerned is represented.

[Announcer] Dr. Velayati, thank you very much for taking part in this live link from Damascus with the first channel of the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran and answered our questions.

[Velayati] Thank you very much.

### Iran: Radio Says Lebanon 'Testing' Ground for U.S. Weapons

*LD2204130196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] On the 12th day of widespread Zionist onslaughts on Lebanon, the number of wounded and martyred is on the rise, bringing new dimensions to the disaster engulfing the oppressed nation of Lebanon. [passage omitted]

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Many analysts believe what is fuelling the flames of fire in Lebanon for the 12th day running is in fact the UN Security Council's inactivity and silence. Beyond doubt, America's blatant interventions in the UN Security Council, which is a major international body, is the main factor giving rise to the Zionist regime's shameless acts of devastating residential areas and economic centers in Lebanon.

It is obvious that over-support of the U.S. Government for the Zionist regime, in its attacks on Lebanon and its giving a positive response to the Zionist regime's flagrant aggressions, have cleared the way for further onslaughts by the Zionists. (?Although amidst) recent disasters, France, Italy, and Russia — after a 10-day silence — have gathered in Damascus to explore ways of putting an end to the humanitarian tragedy, the U.S. presence at the joint session has countermanded all the diplomatic efforts.

It is astonishing that the Zionist prime minister, after meeting with the U.S. secretary of state in Tel Aviv, rejected any mediation by European countries, accepting only U.S. mediation to end the attacks. Such statements by Zionist officials testify to the fact that the death of hundreds of innocent Lebanese women, men, and children at the hands of the Zionists is the result of a sinister bond between Washington and Tel Aviv.

Undoubtedly, Lebanon has become the scene of testing high tech U.S. arms by the Zionist regime. Hence, the blaming fingers of all free nations across the globe are being pointed at the United States evermore, which is, with one hand, holding the bogus banner of peace in the Middle East, and with the other, is issuing the order to have defenseless civilians assaulted in Lebanon, that is, by the Zionists.

**Iran: Syrian Diplomat—Israel Committing 'Criminal Aggression'**

*LD2304090196 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA — Syrian Ambassador to Tehran Ahmad al-Hasan stressed that Israel is committing "criminal aggression" against the Lebanese nation.

In an interview with the English [language] daily 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' printed Tuesday [23 April], he noted, "Syria coordinates its efforts with Iran, Lebanon, France and other European states to make America exercise pressure on Israel to stop its criminal aggression against the Lebanese people."

On U.S. role, he said that Israel could not launch this major aggression against Lebanon which was not restricted to Hizballah bases but covered all of Lebanon, unless it received the green light from the American Administration.

Al-Hasan recalled that such U.S. attitude had encouraged the Zionist state to "defy all world public opinion and at the same time ignore protests from other countries" demanding a halt to Israeli atrocities against Lebanese civilians.

Asked if at all the Syrian army present in Lebanon had taken measures to ease the plight of Lebanese civilians now being attacked by Israeli forces from land, sea and air, the ambassador said, "Israel aims at extending its aggression which has afflicted many economic and civil areas in Lebanon. Thus it also wants to draw Syria into a direct conflict with it. I think such a direct confrontation is not in the interest of the region."

He further observed that political dialog is the best recourse at this time despite the fact that the Zionists do not necessarily understand the "political language".

**Iran: European Commission Criticizes U.S. on Iran Bill**

*LD1904192696 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The European Commission has once again opposed U.S. actions against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The vice president of the European Commission yesterday sharply criticized the U.S. Congress for having approved a bill to punish companies which cooperate with Iran in the field of oil. Mr. Leon Brittan stressed that the European Commission is opposed to the use of economic measures for achieving political aims and said Europe will defend its economic interests.

**Iran: Habibi Calls For Military Research, Cites U.S. 'Mischief'**

*LD2204110696 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 15 Apr 96 pp 1, 14*

["A Powerful Iran Is a Powerful Bastion in the Face of the Mischief and Bullying of the World of Arrogance"—ETTELA'AT headline]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran, IRNA — First Vice President Mr. Hasan Habibi addressed ceremonies marking the first scientific and research festival of the Armed Forces in Tehran. He emphasized that the Armed Forces should be strengthened all the more in order to foil the efforts of the enemies of the revolution.

Mr. Habibi said to the gathering of dozens of the country's Armed Forces commanders: Islamic Iran's steadfastness and refusal to compromise in the face of

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the coercions and plots of global arrogance has been successful in thwarting all efforts to deliver blows to this Islamic system.

He said: It is necessary for the Armed Forces to be alert and fully prepared.

The first vice president stressed that Iran's military capability is not directed against any of the countries in the region and the concerns expressed by some of the neighboring countries — because of the allegations of foreigners — are unfounded.

Mr. Habibi added: A powerful and strong Iran will serve as a shield against the mischief and coercions of global arrogance in the region.

He then explained that research in the field of military technology is necessary and called on Iranian experts to increase their efforts in this connection.

Mr. Habibi said: Under circumstances where America has mobilized all its efforts to prevent Iran from progressing in the area of advanced technology and science, Iranian experts and scholars are dutybound to seriously step up their research in all fields, for peaceful purposes, to the point where self-reliance can be achieved.

Mr. Habibi, at the same time, praised the relentless efforts of the armed forces' researchers. [passage omitted]

Before Mr. Habibi's speech, Major General Ali Shahbazi, chief of the Joint Staff of the Islamic Republic of Iran, presented a report on the performance of the Armed Forces in the area of self-sufficiency and expressed the hope that the science-research festival of the Armed forces will contribute to the progress of the Armed Forces and of the army specifically.

**Iran: Daily Comments on President Clinton's Visit to East Asia**

*LD2304105896 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 18 Apr 96 p 12*

[Commentary by M. Mollazehi: "Clinton's Visit to East Asia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The visit to East Asia by U.S. President Bill Clinton and his talks with the leaders of Japan and South Korea received extensive coverage in various political circles. Some have compared this trip with Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972. Such a comparison demonstrates the importance of this region and its security to the United States and its allies after the cold war.

Following the recent anti-American demonstrations in Japan and South Korea, where the biggest number of U.S. troops are stationed, the U.S. military presence in the region is being seriously questioned. The U.S. President is trying to find a way of curtailing the anti-American sentiments. The plan to redeploy some of the U.S. troops from the Japanese island of Okinawa is an example of these efforts.

The U.S. President's visit to Japan was particularly significant. During this visit the two sides stressed the need for greater cooperation between the United States and Japan to safeguard peace in the Far East. The United States, however, expects Japan to contribute more to the cost of maintaining regional security. That is, in addition to shouldering the financial burden of keeping the U.S. forces in the region, the U.S. Government expects Japan to bring in some Japanese troops . But according to the Japanese constitution, which was imposed by the United States after World War II, Japan is not allowed to deploy any of its military forces outside the country's national boundaries.

Despite this, the Japanese Government wants the framework of the military cooperation to be very clear and the Japanese military will be able to protect security in the region on an equal footing with that of the Americans.

At the same time, it should be noted that Japan is aware of possible sensitivities by the East Asian countries, which have unpleasant memories about the military period of Japan's empire. Japan does not want its ever-increasing trade and economic ties with East Asia to be influenced by such security issues. There is no unity of view [in Japan] that the security issues are in Japan's national interest. Some circles in Japan believe that the reason the United States, in its new security strategy in East Asia, raises the issue of Japan accepting more responsibility is the fact that it wants to put some burden of the financial costs of maintaining security on the shoulders of the Japanese nation and at the same to reduce the possibility of closeness between Japan and China.

The fast and continued growth of China's economy and the complex of ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations], together with a dangerous level of balance of payments which the United States owes to Japan [as published], created some concern in Washington that closeness between Japan and China will endanger the U.S. political, trade, and military position in East Asia. And the United States will not be able to maintain the high position it has enjoyed so far in this part of the world.

Changes in international power criteria from military to economic have put American technology in a weaker position and have made it difficult [for the Americans]

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to benefit from military power in order to guarantee its monopolistic, trade, and economic interests.

The reason Clinton's visit has been given such a high profile as that of Nixon in 1972 to East Asia, is the fact that Nixon's visit was successful at that stage and caused China to express the same views as the United States on most world issues.

The question remains whether Clinton, making a similar move, will be able to create new security measures in East Asia in which the United States, by accepting minimum cost, can earn maximum interest? Apparently regional developments in East Asia are not such that optimistic expectations will be justified.

**Iran: Paper Condemns Israeli-Turkish Military Pact**

*LD2204184196 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 20 Apr 96 p 2*

[From the "Viewpoint" feature: "South Lebanon, Ankara, and Tel Aviv" by Yousef Gharavi]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The massive blitzkrieg by Zionist forces against civilian targets in south Lebanon continued unabated on the ninth day yesterday with the shelling of a U.N. base in Cana in the south, which left hundreds of people dead or injured.

The premeditated massacre of civilians, is officially being pursued by the Israeli regime in order to demoralize the people and break their bonds with the Hizballah guerrillas who relentlessly and bravely have resisted the enemy since the onslaught began.

The latest carnage and barbaric act of Tel Aviv demonstrates what is already proved, that this regime respects no bounds in its drive to consolidate its illegitimate hold on occupied Palestine as well as in the so-called "security zone" in south Lebanon.

It would be worthwhile to ask why Zionist Premier Shim'on Peres chose to escalate violence in south Lebanon at this particular juncture, when in the Middle East all efforts are being channelized for drawing the final conclusions of the U.S.-backed peace process.

The nagging question is why is Tel Aviv increasing tension in the south? Is it to respond to Hizballah resistance in a different way and hence launch its operations with more intensity?

Political analysts in the Middle East believe that the grave situation in the vicinity of the borders between occupied Palestine and Lebanon is a calculated gimmick meant as a cover-up for the more dangerous military accord recently signed by Turkey and Israel.

The military cooperation which came into force last Tuesday [16 April] with the arrival of the first batch of eight Israeli fighter planes in Turkey, provides for mutual access to military ships at ports in the two countries, cooperation between defence industries and exchange of information.

The entire Arab world reacted furiously to the pact and called it an act of treachery.

It is needless to say that no Muslim country in the world has been accorded such important military facilities as made available to the sworn enemy of the Muslim ummah. As such the Israeli Forces launched their major aggression in Lebanon to divert attention from the significance of the military cooperation between the two countries.

Turkey has recently come under unprecedented fire from the Arab world, among them some friendly countries, who have condemned the accord as a threat to the region's security.

It appears that both Turkey and Israel felt the need to shift the focus on the accord. Thus began the vicious military aggressions of the Zionists in south Lebanon, largely to help Ankara and Tel Aviv evade the consequences of a possible united Arab stand against their unholy pact.

**Iran: Basij Commander Protests Election Advertisement**

*LD2004170196 Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Apr 96 p 4*

["Election Campaign Under the Title of Basij is Forbidden."]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the publication of an advertisement in support of some [Majles] candidates entitled "A Group of Basijis", the following letter was sent to this newspaper by the commander of the Basij Resistance Force:

Dear manager of SALAM,

Following the publication of an advertisement on behalf of a group of Basijis from east Tehran supporting a number of the election candidates; as announced by the General Staff Command Headquarter of the Armed Forces before the first round of the elections, campaigning for the candidates on behalf of the armed forces, including the Basij, is forbidden.

Bearing in mind the above, and repeated complaints made by the east Tehran [Islamic Revolution] Guards [Corps, IRGC] Basijis in this respect, please inform the

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hezbollahi nation of the above in the first possible issue of that paper.

[Signed] Commander of the IRGC's Basij Resistance Force - IRGC Brigadier-General 'Ali Reza Afshar.

The department in charge of advertisements apologizes for the negligence in this respect. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that the same headline was also used by a number of other newspapers for the election campaigns of candidates.

**Iran: Militant Clerics Society Candidate Interviewed**

*LD2104205996 Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Apr 96 p 14*

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Serajoddin Musavi by SALAM correspondent: "Our Nation Favors the Participation of All Groups in the Running of the Country"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Note: In continuation of the interviews conducted with knowledgeable people by the political service of SALAM about the elections for the fifth term of the Majles, today we draw the attention of our eminent readers to the remarks by Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Serajoddin Musavi, candidate for the fifth term of the Majles for the Coalition of Groups in the Line of the Imam and a member of the Militant Clerics Society [majma'e ruhaniyun mobarez], who has gone through to the second round of the elections.

SALAM: What is your assessment of the results of the first round of the elections and what is your prediction about the final composition of the Majles?

Musavi: The conditions that were brought about, the efforts made by the officials of the system to hold sound elections, and the admirable work undertaken by the authorities meant that, first, there was an increase in the number of candidates, increasing diversity in this regard. It also caused greater motivation and interest among the various strata of the people to take part in the elections, displaying the strength and wisdom of the nation, with the presence of 25 million people forming a sea of voters at the ballot boxes. Of course, there were shortcomings in the examination of the candidates' qualifications and the rejection of some revolutionary and experienced forces, which must not be forgotten.

Regarding the results of the elections, it seems as if committed, independent, and moderate forces have gained more votes and, in view of the fact that a limited number of deputies from the fourth term of the Majles were reelected, it appears that the composition of the next Majles will change noticeably, encompassing a range of active and political factions and moving away from the current monopoly.

SALAM: In its campaign posters, the Militant Clergy Association [ruhaniyat] has warned people against voting for liberals. What, in your opinion, is the reason for this attribution — by this faction to its rivals — of such things as liberalism or opposition to the velayat-e faqih [rule by a supreme jurisconsult]?

Musavi: Of course, you must ask them themselves the reasons for this kind of campaign and ask for evidence and justifications. However, if a comparison is made between the candidates elected in the first round and the candidates who have gone through to the second round — people who have gained the trust of the voters after being approved by the Guardian Council — and deputies in the fourth Majles and the candidates of the Militant Clergy Association, I, personally, do not see any convincing evidence for this claim, and there is no evidence proving that the candidates of the Clergy Association do not have liberal tendencies or that the other candidates, especially in Tehran, where most of them have the approval of well-known and respectable organizations, do.

Of course, raising this slogan in the second round is also a kind of disrespect for the people's choice. Our Muslim people have supported and endorsed these candidates in the first round, after the approval of the Guardian Council. That is why they have gone through to the second round. It would seem that it is a monopolistic viewpoint — that considers the defense of values and the velayat-e faqih to be its own and its own group's monopoly — that leads to such slogans.

The people have seen the achievements of the rule of the velayat- e faqih and rejecting revolutionary elements with such slogans or dividing political activists into supporters or non-supporters of the velayat-e faqih weakens the regime in a way. People who obey the system in general and on all fundamental issues, obeying the constitution and supporting the values achieved by the revolution, must not be subjected to this unkindness.

It must be made clear what are the indicators that reveal hezbollahi forces, supporters of the deprived, believers in Islamic values, opposers of the penetration of alien culture, supporters of pure Mohammedan Islam, and opposers of the hegemony of arrogance — especially the United States — and respect must be shown for the philosophy behind the election law and the law itself, which makes the choice of the people the essential measure.

SALAM: What is your assessment of the political and cultural climate of the country, and what impact will

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the composition of the fifth term of the Majles have on improving or restricting and limiting this climate?

Musavi: In view of the missions of the Islamic Republic of Iran and in view of the fact that it serves as a glimmer of hope for the deprived and freedom-loving people of the world, whatever is done here in terms of increasing popular participation, creating unity, consolidating the solidarity of the nation and presenting an effective model will not be enough. We must, with each passing day, cross further stages of development in the formation and performance of institutions and political organizations, and, by strengthening the pillars of the system and consolidating ever more the bases of power and the legitimacy of this system, make enemies despair of plotting conspiracies and exerting pressure on this sacred system. Thus, while we should acknowledge that we are now enjoying a fairly good state of affairs, nevertheless, we must not overlook the grave mission of this system in propagating a spiritual government, culture, and morality.

The achievements of the Islamic revolution regarding national unity and cooperation, belief in our political and cultural strength, and solidarity in the face of the enemies of the revolution are considerable. However, they must be subjected to greater supervision and protection, elevated, and institutionalized. The fact that some monopolistic or intolerant elements occasionally take charge of such important affairs is a consequence of weakness in this area.

With a brief review of the results of the first round of the elections, it would seem as if our nation supports the participation of all reputable groups in the running of the country. The first thing that the fifth Majles should do is to review the people's tendencies in the elections and pay attention to their legitimate wishes. A restricted political and cultural climate leads to a silencing of ideas and an absence of participation. Thus, the country's political and cultural climate must be activated, while adhering to the principle of republicanism, that is, respect for the wishes and interests of the people, as well as the Islamic nature of the system, that is, within the framework of Islamic oughts, ought nots, and values, so that the required national cooperation and solidarity is achieved when necessary and in the confrontation of problems and the conspiracies of enemies.

SALAM: What is your opinion about the annulment of the elections in some constituencies?

Musavi: The annulment of elections in cases where a law has been broken is inevitable and this has been foreseen in the law. However, the culture of elections makes it imperative for the people and officials to given the necessary explanations. For my own part, based on my examination of the ideas of Imam Khomeyni — may God be satisfied with his deeds — and based on the support and endorsement given by the eminent Imam — may God be satisfied with his deeds — to the Guardian Council, I have come to the conclusion that, in cases where the Guardian Council is responsible for verification that laws are in keeping with the sacred shari'ah and the constitution, he called on that council to be decisive, immovable, and adamant. However, in the elections for the third term of the Majles, we saw that his view about its behavior on election issues was to suggest the utmost caution in order to preserve the dignity of the Islamic Republic and of Islam.

It seems as if people who are linked to a particular faction feel that they can realize their wishes through the Guardian Council. It has been heard that some elements in that faction had been predicting annulments before the eminent Guardian Council had declared its view.

SALAM: What effect will the composition of the fifth Majles have on the presidential elections and the state of the country?

Musavi: The election of deputies and a change in the term of the Majles is a result of the elections, and, as stated by the eminent leader and other officials, the presence of the people and the renewed endorsement of the Islamic Republic is one of the other outcomes of the elections. Also, since these elections are the closest national expression of opinion before the presidential elections and in view of the fact that the Majles is a center manifesting the will and power of the people, it will have a major impact on the presidential elections. The selection of ministers, the adoption of policies, and the approval of the country's programs are among the most sensitive issues affecting the country's situation and influencing public opinion.

SALAM: What is your opinion about the economic conditions in the country, in general, and about the policy of economic adjustment, in particular?

Musavi: Through an examination of economic indicators, such as the gross domestic product, the volume and value of industrial and food products, the level of energy, the country's import and exports or figures relating to the country's budget, one can see the effects and blessings of the Islamic revolution and the period of reconstruction very well. Nevertheless, in view of the slogans of the Islamic revolution and its duties towards deprived sections of the population, we should also bear other indicators in mind. The fair distribution of wealth, the availability of a minimum of educational, health, and living facilities to the people, alongside the development of production and industry, are aspirations of our revolution.

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I would recommend maintaining a balance. If we forego essential and fundamental projects and economic programs for the sake of attending to people's day-to-day lives, future generations will criticize us, and, again, if we inflict harm on the low income and deprived sections of the population in order to undertake infrastructural projects, we will be accused of extremism and excess.

Strengthening the foundations of the country's economy and production, expanding culture, work and endeavor, preventing a culture of consumerism, promoting a culture of being satisfied, paying attention to deprived people, placing emphasis on environmental and local exigencies, and avoiding the imposition of non-local prescriptions for the economy will lead to the improvement of the country's economic conditions.

Money and capital must be seen as tools serving Islamic and national values. Most of the shortcomings regarding the distribution of goods and the provision of essential goods to the people arise from a lack of maturity in the private sector of the country's economy. In exchange for the resources, facilities, and security from which it benefits, this sector must respect national resources and the policies of the government, accept responsibilities, not be tempted by un-Islamic interests and not disturb the country's economic stability.

**Iran: Abu Torabi's Withdrawal From G-6 List Attacked**

*LD1904222796 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 17 Apr 96 p 2-3*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — An influential hopeful of the G-6 list for the run-off declared yesterday that he has no more affiliation to the Construction Executives.

Former prisoner of the Iraqi imposed war, 'Ali Akbar Abu Torabi, was included in the list of the Construction Executives or G-6 for the March 8 elections of the Fifth Term of the Majles.

"I thank you for the love you have shown to me," Abu Torabi addressing the G-6 members said.

"From the very beginning, I had some doubts in my mind about some members of the Construction Executives and was not inclined to join them," he said.

"But," he said, "I have due respect for some of the Construction Executives and hence accepted to be a candidate of the faction."

"Pursuant to certain developments, including statement of some executives and talks on exorbitant expenses made by the faction, I realized that there should be no room for me in that (G-6) list," Abu Torabi said.

He stood third in the list of the first round of elections with 804,075 votes from the Tehran Constituency. Two contenders including 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri and Ms Faezeh Hashemi got clear cut votes to win seats in the Fifth Term of the Majles.

In this way, Abu Torabi is on the top of the list of the candidates of the Tehran Constituency.

"Yes, the withdrawal of Abu Torabi will hurt the G-6 and might have an adverse impact on the Friday run-off," one expert told IRAN NEWS.

Abu Torabi was also a common candidate for the lists of the G-6 and Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association] (JRM).

Addressing a press conference one of the G-6 leaders, Ghulam Reza Karbaschi said, "We had detail exchange of views with Mr. Abu Torabi before inclusion of his name in our list."

"We made it clear to Mr. Abu Torabi that only those candidates will be included in our list who have fresh ideas for the reconstruction of the country no matter whether they belong to rightist or leftist factions," Karbaschi said.

Commenting on the same issue another leader of the G-6, Mohammad Hashemi said, "Morally he (Abu Torabi) is wrong as he utilized our facilities for the election campaign." Deputy President in charge of the Executive Affairs, Hashemi said, "It would have been better for him if he had declared his intention at the earliest stage of the elections."

**Iran: Three More G-6 Candidates Withdraw From Elections**

*LD2204195296 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 18 Apr 96 p 2*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN, 17 April — Three more candidates of the "Servants of Construction" (G-6) in a statement on Wednesday [17 April], announced their withdrawal from the group's list in the run-off election from Tehran Constituency.

According to reports, the election headquarters of Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association] said in a statement that Hojjat ol-Eslam Mowahedi Kermani, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mojtahed Shabestari, and Ms Marzieh Vahid Dastjerdi had announced their dissatisfaction for being registered on the "Servants of Construction" list.

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The statement said the three candidates were unhappy over the violation of rules regarding election campaign expenses, and the use of governmental facilities in the campaign.

Earlier Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Abu-Torabi had withdrawn from the G-6 list.

It should be noted that the withdrawal of more candidates from G-6, particularly those who enjoy popularity among the people, like Abu-Torabi, certainly would have adverse consequences on the group's election campaign.

But, Karbaschi, one of the co-founders of G-6, believed that the withdrawal of Abu-Torabi and some other candidates, will have nothing to do with its campaign for the Friday run-off.

But, Mohammad Hashemi, the president's brother and member of G-6, nervously, attacked Abu-Torabi for his move and said it would have been better for him if he had declared his intention in the initial stage of the elections itself he described Torabi's move as "morally wrong" since he "utilized our facilities for the election campaign" [sentence as published].

However, reports indicated that Abu-Torabi's move, left the G-6 election headquarters in the state of uncertainty.

The following are some highlights of Friday's elections:

Hezbollah of Tehran in a statement announced their list of candidates, which is akin to the Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez' list, with just three exceptions.

Some huge placards of Servants of Construction have been replaced with new ones.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Karrubi in an interview said: "Once again I as a servant, recommend people to ensure a massive turnout in the second round of the elections like in the first. [no closing quotation mark as published]

The Islamic Society of Doctors in a statement announced their readiness to massively participate in the elections and denounced the new trend of liberalism in the country.

Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi asked the people to have a more active presence in the second round of the elections.

**Iran: Hashemi, Karbaschi Ridicule Mud-Slinging at G-6**

*LD2204195896 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 18 Apr 96 p 1*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — A leading member of the Construction Executives, or G-6, yesterday brushed aside charges leveled against the group, saying they had "a specific aim for the country and its development and do not want to be involved in a petty exchange of accusations."

"We presented a plan to voters for the development of this country before the elections," Deputy President in charge of Executive Affairs Mohammad Hashemi told IRAN NEWS in an interview.

"So far, the election results show that the people are interested in our plans and they support us in the Majles," Hashemi said.

"I want to make clear that our group firmly believes in the country's Constitution - and there should be no ambiguity in this just because accusations are being made against us," he stated.

Without elaborating, Hashemi confirmed that "yes, we have enough seats in the forthcoming Majles."

"We have to wait until the final results of the April 19 elections are made public."

Hashemi clarified that the G-6 was not against the ban on satellite television imposed by the Majles. The ban on foreign satellite broadcasts was enacted last year after it was decided that they posed a cultural onslaught.

He also commented that Islam permitted females to take part in exercise and that the G-6 supported this as a healthy practice. "Those who make up these strange stories against us are making a mistake," Hashemi said.

Tehran Municipal Mayor Ghulam Husayn Karbaschi, in an interview with IRAN NEWS, also spoke out against some of the accusations, saying the Majles Inquiry Committee had been given all the necessary information in connection with its investigation into Tehran municipal affairs, despite claims to the contrary.

"We are now waiting for a result from the investigation and expect the outcome to be announced by the Majles as public information," Karbaschi stated.

Asked whether he thought the Majles inquiry could have been launched to disparage his character and force him to withdraw from next year's presidential elections, or lessen his chances, he said it was the genuine right of the Majles to make the inquiry.

"I have no information if some misused this right," he added.

Majles Deputy 'Ali Movahedi Savooji in an earlier interview with IRAN NEWS had alleged that legal action might be taken against Karbaschi as a result of the inquiry.

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When asked to comment on Savooji's hypothesis, Karbaschi said that he would "accept the judgement of the Judiciary and have no objection to it."

**Iran: G-6 Construction Group Nominates 'Abdullah Nuri for Speaker**

*LD2204163196 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 18 Apr 96 p 3*

[Headline: "Which Nuri is Your Darling?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "You know, sir? They say the alliance of the so-called leftists and the G-6 [Group of Six, Servants of] Construction miracle-men are going to nominate Mr. 'Abdullah Nuri for the post of the Majles speaker to stand against the present speaker, Mr. 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri of the JRM [Jame'eh-ye Ruhaniyat-e Mobarez, Militant Clergy Association] doesn't this village of Nur in northern Iran frequently produce great statesmen?"

"It certainly does! And the most renowned of them was the martyr of the Constitutional Revolution, Shaykh Fazlullah Nuri."

"Yes, him.'Actually, sir, what was it he said to deserve such harsh treatment?"

"Oh, no fault was found with him at all, he did favor the revolution, he only expressed the opinion that Iranian laws should be based on the Islamic Shariah; this the liberals, the modernists, and the West-infected elements did not like, so they had him hanged!"

"What perversity! What a tragedy! Yet, master, that is past history now, but, as far as Nuris are concerned, which do you prefer?"

"I still vote for Shaykh Fazlullah Nuri, and those who follow his path."

**Iran: Rafsanjani Supporters Suffer 3 More Defections**

*LD2204201696 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 18 Apr 96 p 1*

[From the 'News Analysis' column: "G-6 Angered by 3 More Defectors, Run-Offs To Be Held Tomorrow" by our political commentator]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN: The Construction Executives (G-6) [Group of Six, Servants of Construction, reformist faction of Iranian officials around President Rafsanjani] yesterday lambasted three more defectors from their list for Friday's [19 April] elections in the Tehran Constituency, saying rivals were using tactics to continue their domination in the next majles. The G-6 did not give the rivals names, but the Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobaraz (JRM) [Militant Clergy Association] has the majority in the outgoing majles.

The three defectors were the candidates held in common on the lists of the G-6 and JRM. They were Ms Marziyeh Vahid Dastjerdi, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohsen Shabestart and Ayatollah Mohammadali Movahedi Kermani [names as published].

A joint communique from the three alleged that the G-6 had "spent extravagant money on the election campaign and also used the government-owned facilities in their fight." On Tuesday, another G-6 candidate, 'Ali Akbar Abu Torabi, defected alleging similar reasons.

A G-6 statement has said defection is an "immoral act" and asked voters to include the remaining 24 contenders only in their election format. The coming Tehran election is a run-off for 28 seats.

The G-6, however, gave a sigh of relief when the Guardians Council yesterday approved election results for the Kerman Constituency where Hussein Mara'ashi was declared the winner by election authorities.

A G-6 sympathizer commented to Iran News that the Kerman win was "a great relief to us as Mr. Mara'ashi has been an important pillar in the structure of the G-6."

Mara'ashi was the head of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's office. It is believed that he will function as a coordinator between the presidency and the G-6 in the Majles.

Meanwhile, election campaigning was due to stop at midnight prior to Friday as voting day. Tehran citizens may have noticed that the election campaign for the run-off was more lively than the lead-up to the March 8 elections for the 270-strong Majles.

**Iran: Citizen Accuses Radio, TV of Bias in Majles Elections**

*LD2204172996 Tehran SALAM in Persian 18 Apr 96 p 3*

[From the "Hello SALAM" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified caller] I would like to raise a question in connection with the role played by the Voice and Vision in the Majles elections: During the 0800 news on Thursday, 11 April, a radio correspondent was interviewing the people about the political loyalty of certain candidates. It was said that these candidates are the followers of the .... [all ellipses as published] faction. What do you think?

The interview proves that unfortunately the Voice and Vision organization is biased. The campaign is going so badly for the .... faction that it has to ask the Voice

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and Vision organization to assist it. I suggest that the public prosecutor of Tehran Province, who is very eager to ascertain proper implementation of the law, listens to the recorded tape of this interview and questions the responsible authorities of the Voice and Vision organization about their stance.

[SALAM] Your questions remind me of a story: It is said, a man was so drunk that he had to lean on a wall when walking though a narrow lane. Suddenly he saw the congregational prayer leader of the district coming from the opposite direction. He panicked because he could not go back or avoid the prayer leader. He had to confess to the prayer leader that he was drunk. The prayer leader answered: It is quite clear that you are drunk, there is no need to point it out.

Now there are some individuals who will not refrain from doing anything in order to secure a victory for their own faction. They are not even ashamed of confessing to prayer leaders that they are doing something grossly wrong.

**Iran: SALAM Calls For Tolerance Among Election Rivals**

*LD2204181396 Tehran SALAM in Persian 18 Apr 96 p 3*

[From the "Hello SALAM" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] You should not put pressure on those people who have lived 18 years in this country, and believe in the principled framework of the Islamic system and Velayat-e Faqih [rule by supreme jurisconsult] and who are not anti-revolution either.

Taking into account the late Imam [Khomeyni's] comment who had said that the lever [of judgment] was the vote of the nation, then, leave the nation to vote. Anyone who lives in this country should be able to become a candidate. They spread propaganda that so and so has been interviewed by the BBC.

In any case, the credentials of all these people will ultimately be scrutinized and approved by the Majles. If we are now unable to tolerate one or two of our opponents then, in future, the country's administration will face greater problems.

**Iran: Final Results Announced for 2d Round of Voting in Tehran**

*LD2104124896 Tehran IRNA in English 1119 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 21, IRNA — Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Abutorabi-Fard received 683,597 votes to stand on top of the list of 28 candidates elected to the Majles from Tehran constituency in the run-off elections held on Friday [19 April].

According to a report released by the elections headquarters of the Interior Ministry a total of 1,431,431 ballots were cast during the second round of voting in Tehran, Rey, Shemiranat and Eslamshahr constituency.

The following is the list of the 28 elected contenders with the votes they received:

| Name | Votes |
|---|---|
| Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Abutorabi-Fard | 683,597 |
| 'Abbas Sheybani | 665,091 |
| Ms. Marziyeh Vahid-Dastjerdi | 588,710 |
| Mohammad Reza Bahonar | 570,289 |
| Seyyed 'Ali Akbar Musavi-Hoseyni | 552,269 |
| Hasan Ghafuri-Fard | 550,915 |
| Mohsen Mojtahed-Shabestari | 536,197 |
| Mohammad 'Ali Movahedi-Kermani | 500,008 |
| Ms. Nafiseh Fayyazbakhsh | 489,439 |
| Ghorbanali Dorri-Najafabadi | 477,417 |
| Ms. Soheyla Jelodarzadeh | 475,400 |
| Mohsen Yahyavi | 467,910 |
| Hasan Rowhani | 465,902 |
| Seyyed Mahmud Doa'ei | 464,770 |
| 'Abdollah Nuri | 449,321 |
| Ms. Monireh Noubakht | 434,180 |
| 'Ali Reza Mahjub | 411,431 |
| 'Abolqasem Sarhadizadeh | 411,238 |
| Seyyed Reza Akrami | 405,078 |
| Musa Zargar | 400,709 |
| Mohammad Javad Ardeshir Larijani | 398,897 |
| Majid Ansari | 397,022 |
| Davud Danesh-Ja'fari | 393,719 |
| Ms. Fatemeh Ramezanzadeh | 389,046 |
| Seyyed Morteza Nabavi | 387,734 |
| Seyyed Reza Taqavi | 382,238 |

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| Name | Votes |
|---|---|
| 'Ali Movahedi-Savoji | 379,869 |
| Seyyed Shahabeddin-Sadr | 372,883 |

Two candidates, Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri and Ms. Fa'ezeh Hashemi gained the majority of votes and were elected to the Fifth Majles during the first round of polls held on March 8.

The Fifth Majles is to officially start work on May 27.

Over 25 million out of 32 milllion eligible voters cast their ballots in the first round of the elections.

**Iran: Guardian Council Probes Results; New Majles To Meet 27 May**

*LD2204123096 Tehran IRNA in English 1044 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Tehran, April 22, IRNA — With the announcement of the final results of the April 19 run-off elections for the Fifth Majles, the Council of Guardians started investigating into the validity of the polls. The Persian daily 'HAMSHAHRI' reported that the Fifth Majles will be inaugurated with 255 deputies on May 27. 14 other deputies are to be elected during by-elections in the cities of Esfahan, Najafabad, Miyandoab, Barkhar, Meimeh, Naieen, Astara and Malayer.

Results of the first round of elections held on March 8 in these constituencies were nullified by the Guardians Council and by-elections will be held five months after investigations into the second round of the polls have been [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

**Iran: 'Progressive' Faction's Willingness To Compromise Criticized**

*LD2204195596 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 18 Apr 96 , p 14*

["Second Round of Elections; Fundamentalists Face to Face With Compromisers" — by Alireza Sarbakhsh]

[FBIS Translated Text] At election time the various factions have been competing with each other using widespread propaganda to get their own candidates into the Majles. If at the last election there was talk of right and left wings, one should ask which factions are competing with each other in the elections for the fifth term of the Majles?

Since imported analyses, such as right wing, modern right, left wing, modern left, conservative, and so forth, are rubbish, because they do not reflect the realities in the structure of the factions in our society, one should ask what titles could be used for the current factions?

Many sympathetic people believe that perhaps one could identify two mainstream factions in the elections for the fifth Majles. The first could be called fundamentalists, religionists and unconditional followers of Velayat-e Faqih [supreme jurisconsult], who insist on preserving Islamic values and beliefs and believe that all rules and regulations governing the society must stem from religion, because Islam, as an all-embracing and global religion is capable of solving all the problems of the society.

The other faction is a group which, instead of insisting on values, relies on a concept called progress and is progressive, so to speak. They rely on economic concepts devoid of values and cultural and religious bases. And by doubting the firm principle of religious government they put forward concepts such as representation [vekalat] instead of guardianship [velayat]. They extend the boundaries of freedom to such an extent that one could be critical of the reputation and deeds of the prophet of God, peace and God's mercy by upon him and his clan. (May God protect us).

Of course, this form of liberalism does not mean that they support freedom and respecting free thinking, but in fact it means that their aim is to weaken religious beliefs and violate sanctities.

They deny the role of religion in politics and have overstepped the bounds of values and revolution. That ideology is subordinate and subservient to the west and does not believe in the enemy cultural onslaught. It basically believes that the issue of the cultural onslaught does not exist, that it is a cultural exchange. Those pseudo-intellectuals believe that if Iran were to have a share of the international markets it should shed many of its fundamental policies, such as standing up to America's extortion and opposing the disgraceful compromise between Arab leaders and Israel, and adopt policies which conform to the new world order. Some economic analysts say that in order to improve oil revenues and so forth one should bow to the wishes of small and insignificant shaykhs in Persian Gulf littoral states and collude with them against the Muslim people of the region.

They, in spite of the deceptive slogan of freedom, cannot tolerate the smallest criticism or objection. Some of them had closed their ears to good advice while they were in office.

Some members of that faction clearly showed in the first round of the elections that to gain power, in spite of the clear orders of the esteemed leader and the regime's

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top officials, they would take maximum advantage of all the government facilities available for the benefit of their faction and would violate election regulations.

The western mass media, using various ploys, support the ideological base of that gang and say their entry in the Majles would be a promise of blossoming Iranian economic. The alert people of Iran, who have always been actively present in fateful events, this time too, should be more alert than ever and once again bring defeat to the West and the admirers of its bestial culture. Today relying on Islamic and revolutionary values, supporting pure Muhammadan Islam and following the goals of His Holiness the Imam are dependent on voting for the defenders of those values. That is what the esteemed leader expects from each and everyone.

**Iran: Yazdi on Human Rights in Iran, Judicial Policies**

*LD2104164696 Tehran IRNA in English 1406 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 21, IRNA — Head of the judiciary Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi in a press conference, attended by local and foreign press representatives, Sunday [21 April] outlined Iran's general policies towards internal and international issues.

Asked wehther Iran has accepted the recent report prepared by the representative of the human rights commission, Maurice Danby Copithorne, on the status of human rights in Iran, he said that Copithorne had dealt with the issue more moderately than former rapporteur Reynaldo Galindo Pohl.

In compiling his report, Copithorne has paid due attention to social, political and cultural characteristics of specific countries.

He said because reports prepared by Galindo Pohl on the status of human rights in Iran were completely prearranged and full of fabrications and lies, Iran objeccted to his return and requested that another repporteur be appointed.

On the rumor of return of the fugitive capitalists to the country, Ayatollah Yazdi said those who had escaped the country for various reasons are allowed to return home and lead a normal life provided that they have not committed any crime.

He said the country has maintained economic and political stability and all Iranians residing abroad are entitled to return home.

On the speedy examination of embezzlement cases last year, he said the judiciary had accelerated its inquiry into the embezzlement cases last year taking into account the approach of the elections. but, he reiterated that the speedy examination of the embezzlement cases was not politically-motivated at all.

Asked by the British Broadcasting Corporatrion (BBC) about the arrest warrant issued by the German federal prosecutor against Iranian Information Minister 'Ali Fallahian and if there was any connection between the arrest warrant and the death edict against apostate author Salman Rushdie, Ayatollah Yazdi said the German prosecutor had issued the warrent without taking into account the international laws.

He stressed that if such acts became customary, there were also cases here on the basis of which German officials would be tried in Iran.

Underlining Iran's respect for international laws and tribunals, Ayatollah Yazdi said that such cases should be referred to the international courts.

On Salman Rushdie, he said Rushdie has been sentenced to death by a great religious scholar and jurisprudent on the basis of Islamic shari'ah and for his vivid offence. A religious edict is different from a judicial verdict, he stressed.

Asked by the BBC reporter that why the edict had not been carried out and the U.S. and foreign media were allowed to use the subject to launch propaganda campaigns against Iran, Ayatollah Yazdi said the fatwa had been issued and its implementation was up to the world Muslims.

He reiterated that it made no difference to Iran whether the U.S. and foreign media were misusing the subject or not.

On reasons for accusing Iran of violation of human rights, he said an Islamic government has been established in Iran whose legal laws have been formulated on the basis of Islamic Shari'ah under which the country has reached economic, political and social stability, become independent from foreign powers and curtailed the hands of economic plunderers. Therefore, he added, colonialist states had stepped in to deal blows on the Islamic system by resorting to various false excuses including violation of human rights.

He said in Saudi Arabia culprits are being beheaded, adding that the world was witnessing extensive crimes of the Zionist regime in Lebanon, but, he stressed that because those governments were dependent on global arrogance, they were not accused of violation of human rights.

On the Iranian assets frozen in the United States, he said that restitution of the Iranian assets in the U.S. was being followed through political channels.

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On identification and arrest of four Turkish spies in Iran, Ayatollah Yazdi said the subject was being followed up from two judicial and political aspects, adding that the judicial inquiry into the case was underway.

Asked by the reporter of the morning daily IRAN about the procedure for treatment of drug addicts, Ayatollah Yazdi said according to an agreement between the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Health Ministry, doctors are allowed to treat addicts willing to quit addiction or else the addicts run the risk of being arrested.

Asked by KEYHAN reporter on the role of the judiciary in harnessing inflation, he said the government is responsible for controlling inflation, but, the judiciary is represented by the jusutice minister in the headquarters in charge of regulating markets. The judiciary is also operating in the framework of the state retribution organization to check price hikes.

In reply to a question raised by the JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI daily as why the court hearing the case of Jalal Farsi has been changed, the Ayatollah said referring the case from one court to another is up to the supreme court which is responsible to remove any fault in court verdicts.

Asked by the reporter of Chinese news agency XIN-HUA on allocation of dlrs. 20 million by the United States for subversive operations against the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Yazdi said the world openly saw the U.S. violating the international law and therefore it is up to the world to judge the U.S.-sponsored state terrorism.

In response to a question on partnership of Iranian women in justice system in the country, he said that women are busy working at Iranian justice system in the capacity of judges, but, currently they could not chair the court. Some women are working as the deputy or consultant of the heads of the justice departments in Iran, he said.

On the rumor spread by foreign mass media on collapse of a 20- year old boy from 18th floor of a building, Ayatollah Yazdi said, "I am surprise that such a slight matter has been magnified by foreign mass media."

He said Shahram Humayun who had stayed for years in the U.S., had bought a flat in Qods township and allowed his apartment to be used for unlawful parties.

The law enforcement forces authorized by the judicial officials entered the flat and saw naked men and naked women staying there. While the police were writing the names of those present in the party Ali Reza Farzaneh went to the balcony and threw himself down.

Ayatollah Yazdi said the report released by the coroner's office indicated that he had been intoxicated by alcholic drinks and been under influence of narcotic drugs. No signs of beating had been found on his body either, he said.

Yazdi said the father of Farzaneh has lodged a complaint against Shahram Humayun and stated that the party had been arranged for murder of his son. He said no one had been involved in his fatal collapse.

**Iran: Armed Forces Ready To Defend 'Every Inch' of Motherland**

*LD1904223896 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Apr p 2*

["Iranian Armed Forces Ready to Defend Every Inch of Our Territory"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Today marks Armed Forces Day which is celebrated with great enthusiasm in Iran, for, after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the armed forces played a crucial role in protecting Iran's territorial integrity.

In the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution the global arrogance began to hatch conspiracies to defeat the revolution from within. The CIA spared no effort in disintegrating the Iranian armed forces by entrapping some of its lackeys to stage coups against the nascent Islamic system.

One of the objectives of the U.S. was to undermine the reliability of the army in Iran. But as the coup plots unfolded, the top echelon of the Islamic system soon realized the raison d'etre of the coups and tried to purge the army from undesirable elements.

Although rebuffed, global arrogance did not stop its plots. Hence, a full-scale war was waged on Iran, spearheaded by global arrogance but carried out by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn.

The Iranian Army, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and the Basij forces, without relying on foreign forces, defended Iranian territory against the invasion of Saddam's army which received the support of almost all big powers of the day.

Iran owes its territorial integrity to the coordination and cooperation between the army and the IRGC. The army and the IRGC fought the enemy, shoulder to shoulder, while the Basijis fought as selfless soldiers of both whenever needed.

As a result, the enemy was defeated in its expansionist drives. Iran succeeded in defending every speck of its territory in spite of the fact that the Iraqi regime received

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all sorts of sophisticated weaponry from every corner of the globe, including chemical weapons. Of course, the petrodollars of some of Arab countries of the Persian Gulf facilitated the deal between Saddam and weapon cartels.

When the enemy's aggression was neutralized, besides continuing their main function of defending the Iranian territorial integrity, the army and the IRGC embarked on utilizing their expertise to reconstruct war damages. As a result, a considerable part of the war-ravaged areas has been reconstructed.

Today, the army and the IRGC are stronger than ever. They are ready to defend every inch of our motherland.

**Iran: Paper—Iran Has Right To Obtain Nuclear Technology**

*LD2304113396 Tehran IRNA in English 0908 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 23, IRNA — Iran has the right, just like any other country, to obtain nuclear technology, including reactors, for peaceful purposes, the English-language 'IRAN NEWS' stressed on Tuesday [23 April].

Commenting on the recent talks between U.S. President Bill Clinton and his Russian counterpart, Boris Yeltsin, wherein the two "agreed to disagree on Moscow's relations with Tehran," the daily noted Clinton's insistence that Moscow abandon its nuclear cooperation plan with Iran and its plans of building a nuclear reactor in Bushehr in the south of the country.

The American move in Moscow is in fact a continuation of Washington's hostility towards the Islamic Republic and is directed at pleasing the Jewish lobby in the U.S., it stated.

Citing inconsistencies in the stances of the U.S., the article noted that while Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has opened all its facilities to international inspectors, Clinton "becomes deaf and dumb" when the fingers are pointed at Israel, an undeclared nuclear power, a non-signatory of the NPT which possesses 200 nuclear war heads, as confirmed western reports.

It also recalled that Clinton's predecessors did not express concern at the plans of the toppled shah to build a nuclear bomb, stressing that it was during the former regime when the accord was signed with siemens for the construction of a nuclear energy complex in Bushehr.

Stating that then, the U.S. never complained as the shah's regime was submissive to Washington, it highlighted the fact that, "every White House occupant will continue (to defame the Islamic Republic) as long as Iran supports the deprived and combats against the exploitation of the U.S."

**Iran: SALAM Column Reflects Social, Economic Problems**

*WA1904143996 FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE MEDIA NOTE*

[FBIS Report]

**1996 Series, Number 4**

The Tehran daily SALAM carries a regular column, "Hello, SALAM" based on telephoned-in complaints and remarks of ordinary Iranian citizens. The following series of dialogues between callers and the paper are excerpted from February editions . These particular complaints deal with lack of freedom, women's issues; Dr. Velayati's many travels, inflation, buying influence, elected Majles deputies, and slogans against the United States.

**On Lack of Freedom:**

[Caller] You stated in response to one of the readers that you wanted to know the instances of lack of freedom. If you are sincere, provide a satisfactory answer to the following:

1. Why is Dr. Sorush confined to his home? Why didn't anyone decide to have a debate with him?

2. What was the reason for closing JAHAN-E ESLAN and PAYAM-E DANESHJU newspapers? Why wasn't there any explanation given to the public?

3. Why was the reason for the disqualification of 80 of the deputies of the Fourth Majles not made public?

4. Was the crime of the editor-in-chief of GARDUN more serious or that of Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani [brother-in-law of Ayatollah Khamene'i]?

5. Why is television closing its doors to the various groups and why cannot criticisms be voiced?

6. Why are all the media under the control of a particular group?

7. why do we hear certain Iranian news from foreign radios and two months later our own media discuss it in a fragmentary fashion?

[SALAM] What is the use of giving our opinion if this esteemed reader doubts our truthfulness?

All the media are not under the influence of one group. As for Dr. Sorush, JAHAN-E ESLAN, and PAYAM-E DANESHJU, the action has been taken for a reason,

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though the reason might not be acceptable to us. The punishment of Sheykh 'Ali Tehrani demonstrates that his crime was more serious. As for the television, since it is one of the government's media, its mission is to protect the government, not to criticize it. [14 Feb 96]

[Caller] Mr. Yazdi said no one in our country is held a prisoner because of the views he holds. Please tell him that in the atmosphere that has been created, we are unable to express our opinion to see whether we will be imprisoned or not.

[SALAM] Then this esteemed reader is of the same opinion as Mr. Yazdi. That is, that we do not have any ideological prisoners. However, the difference is whether it is because of freedom to express one's opinion or lack of it. We do not agree with this reader because we see that there are speakers and writers who hold opposing views and no one protests to them. There are instances, of course, where things are different than what Mr. Yazdi says. We can tell you about them if you are interested. Undoubtedly, it is possible to say that a particular individual was not arrested because of his views but because he was weakening the system or the officials, or because he was disillusioning the public, or was saying the same thing as the enemy. In this case, we have to say that Mr. Yazdi is right and that we do not have any ideological prisoners, but the truth lies somewhere else. [15 Feb 96]

[Caller] Mr. Mohtashemi's talk on the 19th of Ramadan was neither broadcast nor even reported.

[SALAM] This is all due to freedom. Of course, it is the type of freedom where the director of the newspaper believes the media are free to ask and the officials are free not to respond. Regarding election ads and indirect advertisement by an intellectual and political wing and similar problems, anyone is free to undertake this type of thing and the Voice and Vision [Iranian Radio and Television] is free to broadcast it. But in this country anyone who has more power will benefit more from this freedom. If someone is not able to take advantage of this unlimited freedom, it is no one's fault; it is his own fault for not having the power. Since the Voice and Vision is, fortunately, not under any of the three branches, it enjoys more freedom than anyone else. [22 Feb 96]

**On Women's Issues:**

[Caller] As a women I want to know why Majles candidates, even women candidates, do not announce their programs for women. Unfortunately, the oppression of women is immense in spite of the many slogans. It would be good if they would announce their plans so that we would know what they are going to do for us. [22 Feb 96]

**On Velayati's Many Travels:**

[Caller] Mr. Velayati has been traveling for 18 years. He has not spent 18 days, all together, on the ground. He constantly discusses the Bosnian, Afghan, and other problems but does not take any action. Why does he spend so much of the country's money on futile foreign travels? [15 Feb 96]

**On Inflation:**

[Caller] The president said that the salary of the low-income people and civil servants should increase in proportion to the rate of inflation. Why have we not seen any increase in our salary when according to the Central Bank [Bank Markazi], the rate of inflation was 52 percent in the first nine month of 1995?

[SALAM] The president was referring to a yearly increase proportionate to the rate of inflation, not a monthly increase which is not possible legally. But we have to say that this has not been done in recent years and according to the projected budget, it is not going to materialize next year either. [25 Feb 96]

**On Buying Influence:**

[Caller] I read in BAMMAN [newspaper run by Vice President Mohajerani] that the Traditional [Sonnati] Right had received 200 million tumans from the representative of a foreign automobile company in Iran. Has this foreign car representative contributed this money to the Traditional Right without any strings attached? Do you not see any similarities between the era of no news of the Qajar dynasty and our times?

[SALAM] We have no information except the rumors. One rumor has it that one of the well-known figures of the Traditional Right had invited a number of businessmen and capitalists and had asked them for financial assistance—possibly for the election. Those present each contributed 2-50 million tumans. Possibly the short heading of "Businessmen's Deputy" in one of the morning papers was alluding to this. We hope that the numerous spokesmen of the Traditional Right, especially those who ask for the $20 million bill, will elucidate these rumors with their explanations. By the way, it is rumored that the representative of the foreign car company who pledged 200 million tumans, was one of the importers of unauthorized foreign cars who has 15,000 of these vehicles impounded in the customs department. [8 Feb 96]

[Caller] I want to ask the officials whether under the current situation of the country, one could refer to any center and hope to get anything done without spending any money. No matter where you go, whether the Finance Ministry, the Justice Ministry, or the

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municipality, if one does not have any contacts and does not spend any money, nothing gets done. [14 Feb 96]

**On Officials Elected to the Majles :**

[Caller] Please tell those who want to find their way to the Majles that we went through a revolution to eliminate lies, flattery, bribery, discrimination, and double-dealing. That is why people voted for them.

**On Slogans Against the U.S.:**

[Caller] Explain to me without any prejudice how the slogan "Death to America" helps us. Even if we shout a million times "Death to America," would this industrial-military giant die from a slogan not backed by action?

[SALAM] Slogans are always expressions of the public's positions and wishes. It is meant to inspire one's nature to distance itself from filth. "Death to America" demonstrates the people of Iran's position toward a regime which from 19 August 1953 until the fall of the shah and even today, has always plotted against the nation of Iran and has always defended an antinational and antireligious government in Iran. On the other hand, it is a constant reminder to oneself so that dastardly or cowardly people would not dream of becoming dependent on the United States again and become sensitized to react quickly. [12 Feb 96]

## Pakistan

**Pakistan: Blast at USIS Compound Reportedly Caused by 'Grenades'**

*BK2304115896 Karachi DAWN in English 23 Apr 96 p 14*

[Report from DAWN bureau]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore, April 22 — The explosion at the American Center late on Sunday night was caused by two Russian-made hand grenades, according to a local bomb expert.

No casualty had resulted from the explosion but the window panes of the security cabin were smashed. Cantonment division police, which in its first reaction, last night, had termed the explosive devices "fire crackers" admitted on Monday that the explosion was caused by hand grenades.

No official version was available from the American Center.

**Pakistan: Police—Fireworks Caused Blast at USIS Compound in Lahore**

*BK2304092496 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 23 Apr 96 p 1*

[APP report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE, April 22: Police said a blast early Monday morning in the United State Information Centre here was caused by fireworks being used at a wedding ceremony.

According to police the wedding ceremony was taking place at a residence situated near the centre. The police said that fireworks fell on the premises of the building.

No loss of life or property was reported.

A source of USIS said that its security personnel in collaboration with the local police had begun investigation.

**Pakistan: Foreign Secretary on U.S. Arms, Raphel Visit, Afghanistan**

*BK1904130496 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 19 Apr 96 pp 1, 5*

[Report by Aroosa Alam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, April 18 — As the discussions are still continuing between the government of Pakistan and US administration regarding the return of money paid for 28 F-16s, the shipment of 368 million worth military equipment will start in six to eight weeks after proper inspections. This was stated by Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh Thursday afternoon at a press conference after attending the DCC [Defense Committee of the Cabinet] meeting.

Though the Foreign Secretary maintained that the discussions were still going on between the two governments on various options to solve the F-16 issue, indicators revealed that no decision has been taken in DCC to sue the US government on the issue. The Foreign Secretary said that Pakistan's principled position has always been that either it gets its money back or the equipment and the two governments are discussing the issue within the framework of this policy. He categorically ruled out the possibility of Pakistan receiving these fighters under any arrangement in future.

Giving the latest and most updated breakdown of the equipment being released by the US administration, Najmuddin Sheikh said that out of total 368 million US$191 million will go to Navy in shape of PC-3 Orion spy aircraft and 28 Harpoon fire and forget missiles, 98.8 million for PAF [Pakistan Air Force] Sidewinder air-to-air missiles and F-16 engines and US$77.4 million for Pakistan Army includes night

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vision devices, 135 mm artillery pieces, howitzers, rockets and rocket launchers. He said the United States will also refund 124 million US$ in cash to Pakistan as that is the money paid for those equipments that have been diverted to other programme and no longer needed for F-16s. This is a part of reconciliation that has come about in the recent programme management meetings held in Washington recently. The Foreign Secretary said we anticipate further refunds as part of future reconciliation process of Pakistan's FMS [Foreign Military Sales] accounts.

The Foreign Secretary said this release of equipment is a partial implementation of Brown Amendment and discussions are in progress in Washington over the remaining part of the Amendment.

He said the discussions are underway on the renewal of OPEC [as published], trade investment company, resumption of military trainings and bilateral economic assistance programme which needs a waiver under the Symington Amendment. He said this aspect is being considered in Washington and it is believed that the process will take some time. The Foreign Secretary also indicated that discussions between US and Pakistan over the ring magnet issue and CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] remain inconclusive but the relations between the two countries have taken a major leap towards a better future with the passage of Brown Amendment. He said that government of Pakistan is grateful to Clinton Administration that it worked positively and very closely with Pakistan embassy for the passage of Brown Amendment. President Clinton has fulfilled his promise he made to Premier Bhutto during their historical meeting in Washington last April.

Answering a volley of questions by the pressmen about the visit of US Assistant Secretary of State Ms Robin Raphel, he said bilateral relations were discussed and Pakistan's appreciations were conveyed to President Clinton for releasing Pakistan's equipment and carrying the relations forwards.

He said regional situation, particularly, the situation in Afghanistan came under review. He said Pakistan is encouraged with the renewed US interest in Afghanistan.

The Foreign Secretary said that subjects of comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT) and alleged supply of ring magnets to Pakistan were also discussed and Pakistan has elaborated its position on both the issues. He said Pakistan has also expressed its apprehension about the scope and the inspection provisions of the treaty. He said Pakistan is also anxious for the early conclusion of the treaty if its concerns are taken into consideration. He said we have also told Ms Raphel that Pakistan fears that objections raised by India may lead it not to sign the treaty.

He said Ms Raphel is on the comprehensive fact finding visit to the region on Afghan issue. She will visit Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Russia.

The Foreign Secretary categorically denied that Pakistan arranged any meeting between the Iranian Foreign Minister Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Ms Robin Raphel in Islamabad nor it was aware of any such meeting taking place. He said since Pakistan has a friendly relations with both USA and Iran, it is Pakistan's keen desire to play a mediator role.

Dilating upon much awaited visit by the Iranian Foreign Minister, the Foreign Secretary said that the two sides have covered a lot of grounds on Afghan issue. He said the two sides now have great convergence of views on Afghan issue and the two sides are engaged in advance discussion over holding an intra Afghan conference to finalise an interim council for the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

He disclosed that Rabbani government is now ready to pay the compensation and has tendered a strong apology for damaging Pak embassy. He said Pakistan has accepted the apology but is unable to reopen its mission in Kabul as there is no space available for the embassy.

Foreign Secretary said the Iranian foreign minister has also delivered invitations to President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to participate in the inauguration of railway link between Mashad and Turkmenistan which will also link Central Asian Republics.

He described it a major step in the development of ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] communication network. He said the President has accepted the invitation and leading Pakistani delegation to the ECO Summit to be held in Ashgabat and will also participate in the railway link inaugural ceremony.

On Afghanistan both sides have identity of views and agreed to work very closely together to push the idea of bringing Afghans together at a conference in which they can decide among themselves on a broad-based government or an interim government to which power can be transferred. Pakistan is encouraged by the news that Taleban delegation will visit Iran shortly. It is also very encouraging Mestiri's talks with Taleban leaders in Kandahar have been positive.

The Foreign Secretary said such development has taken place in Afghanistan after seven years and reflected

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renewal of international interest as a result of Pa'istani efforts to refocus attention on conditions in that country. He said there was considerable support to the ideas put forward by Pakistan and Uzbekistan for imposition of arms embargo on Afghanistan and for setting up broad-based government there. He said there was no support for some of the statements made by the representative of Kabul regime in the debate.

He also denied reports that Pakistan took General Dostam to New York and made an abortive effort to get him appear before the Security Council. He said General Dostam went to the United States as a guest of an international company interested in economic development in Afghanistan. He said General Dostam visited the headquarters of the company in Houston, Washington and New York.

The Foreign Secretary said Pakistan has no favourites and it seeks to maintain relations with all Afghan factions and persuade them in arriving at some solution acceptable to all Afghanistan.

**Pakistan: Commentary Welcomes Release of U.S. Arms**

*BK1804165996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 18 Apr 96*

[Commentary by A.B.S. Jafri]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It has been announced in Washington that U.S. President Bill Clinton has formally notified the Congress that the government will release military equipment worth $368 million to Pakistan. The announcement has been welcomed in Islamabad. Apart from cash and military equipment which form the most tangible elements in this drama there has been the rather involved and varying perceptions of Pakistan's nuclear status and supposed intentions.

Pakistan had entered into a deal under which Pakistan was to buy U.S. military equipment worth $368 million. The money was paid in advance, the deal had approval of U.S. Government, which is precondition for such deals on hardware. Then cropped up U.S. suspicion that Pakistan's nuclear ambitions had acquired a status which would fall within the mischief of some U.S. laws forbidding the U.S. Government from a series of deals and concessions. Pakistan had always made cash payment in advance. It wanted the deal to go through but the U.S. laws stood in the way. Then Pakistan is expected to receive the cash it had paid in advance, if the arms were not to be delivered as per the contract. Things remained in a jam with Pakistan being denied the arms it had paid for and also the money it had advanced. During an official visit to the United States, Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto succeeded in persuading President Bill Clinton to concede in a formal statement that it was not fair on the part of the United States to express inability to abide by the contract to supply the goods and also being reluctant about returning the money. But placed as he was President Clinton found himself in a legal bind, because the Pressler law, as it stood then, specifically intended to punish Pakistan for some undefined and unascertained offense.

Pakistan's position being so manifestly correct that the climate ultimately changed in the Congress and proposed by Senator Hank Brown, the Pressler law was amended to clear the way. In this long and arduous exercise President Clinton's attitude was most helpful. For its part, the Government of Pakistan moved through all legitimate avenues to clear up what was obviously an unfair and untenable situation from the point of view of Islamabad as well as Washington. And the continuation of impasse was causing embarrassment on both sides. Now the weather had cleared and hopefully Pakistan-U.S. relations are poised to flourish in a climate which is conducive. The decision made by President Clinton and conveyed to the Congress has some very significant positive elements which bear the promise of greater understanding between Islamabad and Washington on some of the delicate issues. This development opens the way for accelerated U.S. investment in Pakistan, because the Import-Export Bank of the United States would not provide full cover which was not so clearly assured. It also signifies that Washington is reasonably convinced that Pakistan has not transgressed any of those limits which [word indistinct] Pakistan exposed to punitive U.S. measures.

It may be worth noticing that President Clinton has made somewhat similar concessions to China which are concomitant to the decision made in the context of Pakistan. It would not be farfetched to infer that new development or the supply of military equipment held up for some years puts to rest the rumpus over the alleged transfer of objectionable nuclear technology between Pakistan and China. There has been quite some furor fueled no doubt by New Delhi over the alleged sale of ring magnets to Pakistan by China. Both Pakistan and China have categorically denied any such transaction over the past several months. It appears that Washington is now satisfied that the ring magnets story was just so much dust raised by those who do not like Islamabad's relations with the U.S. to be restored to the traditional trust and mutual respect. All in all this is a happy development. The equipment may have its military value, but the return of trust and mutual

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understanding is what is of definitely greater value for both Pakistan and the United States.

**Pakistan: Opposition Leader Comments on Talks With U.S. Official**

*BK1804114496 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 18 Apr 96 pp 1,12*

[Report from THE FRONTIER POST Islamabad Bureau]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Leader of the opposition Nawaz Sharif and assistant secretary of U.S. State Department Robin Raphel met here Wednesday [17 April] and discussed the looming constitutional crisis in the wake of Supreme Court judgment regarding appointment of judges to the superior judiciary.

Nawaz apprised Raphel of the policy of his party toward the constitutional crisis. "The Supreme Court judgment was a major step toward the independence of judiciary, but the government was not sincere in implementing it in letter and spirit," Nawaz, according to a press release of the PML (N) [Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz)] issued here, told her.

Nawaz, according to the release, also said that the opposition was engaged in a relentless struggle to safeguard the supremacy of the parliament and independence of judiciary.

"The present session of the parliament has provided a very important opportunity to the opposition to debate the issue extensively and to force the government to take a positive position on this important issue", he said.

However, the PML (N) press release was silent about any comment of Raphel on the issue.

On major national issues like, Kashmir policy, relations with India and the nuclear policy there is a broad national consensus, Nawaz told Raphel.

The two leaders also discussed Afghanistan and Karachi problems.

"Raphel said with the induction of a new parliament after the forthcoming elections in India, there will be a valuable opportunity to initiate meaningful dialogue between India and Pakistan to improve relations between the two countries", the press release concluded.

PPI adds: Leader of the opposition Nawaz Sharif has claimed that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has lost her constitutional right to rule the country as she has subverted the Constitution by not implementing judgment of the Supreme Court. "The prime minister's refusal to implement verdict of the apex court and character assassination of the judges come within the preview of subversion of the Constitution under Article 6 of the Constitution", said Nawaz Sharif.

Addressing a press conference at the PML (N) media centre here Wednesday, Nawaz Sharif said the government is bent upon destroying judiciary by making its judgments controversial. "I stated earlier that the government introduced horse-trading in judiciary. But now it has started arm twisting in judiciary and is pressuring the Supreme Court judges", Nawaz claimed.

He rejected the prime minister's statement that the chief justice of the Supreme Court had been consulted while appointing chief justice in the Sindh High Court. He said the Supreme Court's spokesman, himself said that the chief justice was not consulted while appointing chief justice of the Sindh High Court.

Umer Farooq adds: Blaming the government for making the process of implementation of Supreme Court judgment controversial Nawaz Sharif has alleged the government has adopted the arm-twisting policy regarding judiciary to manipulate the transfer of a senior most judge of Sindh High Court to Supreme Court.

"We apprehend that the government would adopt similar arms twisting tactics at the stage of implementation of judgment when the time for the confirmation of high court judges would come", Nawaz added.

Without naming the senior most judge of the Sindh High Court, he said that the government wants to appoint him as a judge of the Supreme Court and for that matter they have resorted to arm twisting.

"The government by this tactic has made the institution of the Supreme Court controversial which is a crime", said Nawaz Sharif.

He alleged that the government's response to the Supreme Court judgment amounted the subversion of the Constitution, "which according to our opinion comes within the preview of Article 6 of the Constitution".

Nawaz refused to answer any question about Article 6 of the Constitution. However, it would be pertinent to mention here that Article 6 of the Constitution relates to subversion of the Constitution and it declares the subversion of the Constitution equivalent to high treason.

"Benazir Bhutto has lost her right to rule the country", said Nawaz Sharif. When asked whether he would like to see the replay of July 1993 episode (Mian Nawaz Sharif was dislodged), he said, "I hate to be part of any intrigue, but it is for the custodians of the Constitution to decide," Nawaz said.

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He said that a constitutional crisis was prevailing in the country, which would lead to deeper and greater crisis in the country. "Executive is in continuous confrontation with the judiciary and the Parliament", said Nawaz Sharif.

He said that the government had no respect for the rule of law. "Had we not spoken against the attitude of the government towards the Supreme Court, they (PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government) would have trampled the judgment", Nawaz Sharif said. "PML (N) would play its role for the independence of judiciary", said Nawaz Sharif.

When asked whether Muslim League would directly approach the president in this regard, he said. "We have contacted president once and I think there is no need here to remind him (president) of his constitutional duties again", said Nawaz Sharif.

**Pakistan: Delegate to UN Advocates Nuclear-Free Zone in South Asia**

*BK2304101496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 23 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has expressed the hope that a nuclear weapons free zone would soon be established in South Asia. Speaking at the UN Disarmament Commission in New York, Pakistan's deputy permanent representative, Mr. Khalid Aziz Babar, said such zone had already been established in Latin America, Africa, South Pacific, and in the area covered by the ASEAN countries.

He said Pakistan attached highest priority to the eradication of illicit arms transfers which resulted in terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, mercenary, and other destabilizing activities. Pakistan, he said, had itself been a victim of terrorism and as such it strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. He urged to take care of the right to self-determination of the peoples, while imposing any ban on the illegal transfer of weapons.

**Pakistan: 'Sources' Report Britain's Refusal To Extradite MQM Leader**

*BK2304053096 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 22 Apr 96 pp 1,7*

[Report by JANG correspondent in Lahore]

[FBIS Translated Text] Reliable sources have reported that the British Government has refused to turn-over MQM [Mohajir Qaumi Movement] leader Altaf Hussain to any country or investigating agency. Britain has also stopped scrutinizing the documentary evidence and cassettes provided by Pakistan. The British Governinent has assured Altaf Hussain that there is no restriction on him should he want to leave England.

The sources added that some time ago A. Rehman Malik, additional director general of the Federal Investigation Agency, provided documentary evidence and cassettes to British authorities detailing Altaf Hussain's involvement in terrorist activities. Malik also requested Altaf Hussain be extradited. The British Government's has said that since Altaf Hussain's petition for asylum in Britain is still under consideration, no evidence against him can be taken into consideration until a decision has been made on his asylum petition. Sources have also said that according to international law, Interpol can only arrest those who are charged with a criminal offense, and even then Interpol must receive permission from the country where the accused resides. Interpol cannot arrest a person who has applied for asylum and whose petition for asylum is still pending.

**Pakistan: PTV Reports Release of Kashmiri Leaders, Demonstrations**

*BK1904154196 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, the panic-stricken Indian authorities have released All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders under mounting public pressure. Top Kashmiri leaders, including Syed Ali Gilani, Abdul Ghani Lone, Syed Shabbir Shah, Maulvi Abbas Ansari, Khwaja Abdul Ghani, and Yasin Malik, had courted arrest in Srinagar yesterday. Their peaceful march was disrupted through brutal force and the leaders were manhandled. They were forcibly thrown into the police van. This blatant violation of Kashmiris' human rights sent a wave of shock and anger throughout the valley. There were spontaneous demonstrations in all the cities and towns where anti-India slogans were raised. The demonstrators said Kashmiris will never accept the sham elections imposed on them by India.

Meanwhile, the journalists in Srinagar today held a meeting to consider the Indian authorities' ban on publication of reports of mujahideen's operations. They termed the action as a grave violation of their basic rights. They drew international community's attention to the fact that the ban on journalists and expulsion of ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] team from the held valley are clear indications that Indian authorities intend to start a new reign of terror against Kashmiris. A notification issued by the occupied Kashmir governor's administration has warned journalists of strict action if they continue projecting mujahideen's actions against the Indian Armed Forces.

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The secretary general of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Azad Kashmir, and member of the Kashmir delegation to the 52d session of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Safi, has said Kashmir is a disputed territory and an issue of the right of self-determination which should be resolved according to the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

[Begin recording] It is not a bilateral issue, it is a international issue, is a UN-recognized issue, and the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory. During my intervention here in the commission, I said that it's ironic that there are UN resolutions, the map provided by the United Nations speaks about the disputed nature of whole territory, but even then in these commissions and subcomissions, and in New York and in Geneva, the Indian representative talked about Kashmir as the integral part of India. So we are astonished to hear it in the UN machinery, even in the UN machinery [words indistinct] to intervene in such matters and put the issue in the real perspective. [end recording].

**Pakistan: Official Details Efforts With Iran for Afghan Solution**

*BK1904051496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan and Iran have agreed to work closely for bringing the leaders of various Afghan factions together to decide about the formation of a broad-based government to which power can be transferred. This was stated by the foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh, while talking to newsmen in Islamabad yesterday. He said Pakistan was encouraged that a Taleban delegation will be visiting Iran shortly and that the UN special envoy, Mr. Mestiri, in a statement has termed his talks with Taleban leaders in Kandahar as positive.

The foreign secretary said Pakistan has no favorite and seeks to maintain relations with all factions and persuade them to arrive at some solution acceptable to all Afghans. About UN Security Council debate on Afghanistan, the foreign secretary said it was held after seven years and it reflected renewal of international interest in that country. He said there was considerable support to the idea put forward by Pakistan and Uzbekistan for imposition of arms embargo on Afghanistan. He maintained that there was no support for some of the statements made by the representative of the Kabul regime in the debate. He also denied press reports that Pakistan took General Dostam to New York and made an abortive effort to have him appear before the Security Council.

## Sri Lanka

**Sri Lanka: President Kumaratunga To Visit China**

*BK1904133196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Kumaratunga will leave the country early next week on four-day visit to China. She will lead a high-level delegation of ministers and officials. Among those scheduled to accompany her are Minister of Internal and External Trade, Commerce, and Food, Kingsley Wickremaratna, and chairman of Board of Investment, Tilan Vijaysinghe. The discussions will center on trade and economy.

Deputy Defense Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte is expected to be in charge of security matters while the president is away.

**Sri Lanka: President Departs on Official Visit to PRC**

*BK2104141896 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Kumaratunga left this morning for a six-day official visit to China. The president is due to arrive in Beijing this evening. Our special correspondent says that China has prepared a grand welcome for Mrs. Kumaratunga. She will be received by China's only woman cabinet minister, (Xu Qiang) [name and title as heard]. The official welcoming ceremony will be held tomorrow morning at the Great Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square. The president will be accorded a military guard of honor and a 21-gun salute. Mrs. Kumaratunga will then hold talks with Chinese President Jiang Zemin later in the day. Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar will also attend the meeting. The president is scheduled to meet Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng and address a meeting of Chinese businessmen on investment opportunities in Sri Lanka.

**Sri Lanka: Radio Reports on Censorship of Military, Police Information**

*BK2004133996 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government yesterday clamped a censorship on the publication and transmission of sensitive military information under the Public Security Ordinance which is now in force countrywide. Censorship was imposed following the launching

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of the Operation Riviresa-Two to liberate the areas under LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] control. A similar censorship was imposed during Riviresa-One by which government forces wrested Jaffna town and the Velikamam division of the Jaffna peninsula. The censorship which is effective from yesterday bans the printing, publishing, distribution and transmission of all military and police information. It is applicable to the local and foreign media. But the Information Department said that censorship regulations will not be implemented for foreign media.

**Sri Lanka: 'Text' of Military Censorship Regulations**

*BK2204021596 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 20 Apr 96*

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government on Friday [19 April] clamped a censorship on the publication and transmission of sensitive military information under the Public Security Ordinance now in force countrywide.

Censorship was imposed following the launching of Operation Riviresa II to liberate the areas under Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam control. A similar censorship was imposed during Riviresa I, by which government forces wrested Jaffna town and the Waligamam division of the Jaffna peninsula.

Censorship which is effective from Friday, bans the printing, publishing, distribution and transmission of all military and police information.

It is applicable to the local and foreign media. But the Information Department said the censorship regulations will not be implemented for foreign media.

The Director of Information has been appointed as the Competent Authority for the implementation of censorship regulations.

The following is the text of the regulations:

1. These regulations may be cited as the Emergency (Prohibition on Publication and Transmission of Sensitive Military Information) Regulations, No. 1 of 1996.

2. No editor or publisher of a newspaper or any person authorised by or under law, to establish and operate a broadcasting station or a television station shall, whether in or outside Sri Lanka, print, publish, distribute or transmit, whether by means of electronic devices or otherwise, or causes to be printed, published, distributed or transmitted whether by electronic means or otherwise, any material containing any matter which pertains to any operations carried out or proposed to be carried out, by the Armed Forces or the Police Force (including the Special Task Force), the procurement or proposed procurement of arms or supplies by any such forces, the deployment of troops or personnel, or the deployment or use of equipment, including aircraft or naval vessels, by any such forces, or any statement pertaining to the official conduct or the performance of the head or any member of any of the Armed Force or the Police Force.

3. Where any person prints, publishes, distributes or transmits, or causes to be printed, published, distributed or transmitted, whether by electronic means or otherwise, any matter in contravention of the provisions of regulation 2, the Competent Authority may, after issuing such directions, as he considers necessary to effect compliance with the provisions of such regulation, make order that the press or equipment used for such printing, publication, distribution or transmission shall, for such period as is specified in that order not be used for the purpose of printing, publication, distribution or transmission of any matter referred to in regulation 2 and the Competent Authority may be the same order authorise any person specified therein to take such steps as appears to the person so authorised to be necessary, for preventing the printing, publication, distribution or transmission of any such material.

4. The President may for the purpose of these regulations, appoint, by name or by office, any person or body of persons to be the Competent Authority.

5. Any person who prints, publishes, distributes or transmits, any material in contravention of the provisions of regulation 2 shall be guilty of an offence.

**Sri Lanka: Prabhakaran Takes Over Control of Sea Tiger Brigade**

*BK1904132396 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader, Velupillai Prabhakaran, is reported to have taken the Sea Tiger brigade under his personal command after relieving its leader, Soosai alias Thanulingam, of his duty. This has resulted in a severe rift within the ranks of Sea Tigers with serious infighting between two factions of the brigade. The majority of Sea Tigers are extremely loyal to Soosai, and Prabhakaran, who sensed this, has planned various acts of revenge against Soosai loyalists.

Reports say that Soosai has been stripped off all his powers and functions and is being held incommunicado just the same way as LTTE deputy leader, Mahendraraja alias Mahattaya, was treated when he fell from grace and was subsequently executed. Informed sources say that

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Prabhakaran had personally directed the recent abortive Sea Tiger attack on the Colombo Port. Soosai was never consulted on this operation. Soosai had been a dedicated leader who was personally responsible for raising the Sea Tiger wing as a credible force. He had also led a fund raising campaign for the LTTE's Sea Tiger wing by releasing two cassettes and discs in praise of the Sea Tigers. The sources added that he was fast becoming very popular among the LTTE rank and file, and Prabhakaran, who considered him as a possible threat to his leadership, may have cut him down to size.

**Sri Lanka: Security Forces Launch Operation in Jaffna**

*BK1904113196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The security forces have launched an operation code name Riviresa [Sunshine]-two to liberate LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]-controlled areas of the Jaffna peninsula. The operational headquarters of the Defense Ministry says that the offensive began at dawn today. A curfew has been declared in Jaffna and Kilinochchi Districts with effect from 0800 this morning until further notice. The ministry says that every possible precautions will be taken to protect civilian life and property. All civilians have been advised to remain calm and gather at safe places designated by the security forces.

**Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Reports Launch of New Government Offensive**

*BK2204133496 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Chandrika Kumaratunga government has launched another military operation in the north. The Sri Lankan Defense Ministry announced that the operation commenced this morning. It has been reported that about 20,000 Sri Lankan troops are engaged in this operation, codenamed "Riviresa 2." Sri Lankan Government sources say this operation is being undertaken with assistance of the Air Force and Navy. There is no report on this military operation from the headquarters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE].

It may be recalled that Sri Lankan troops recently carried out missile attacks and aerial bombings on the civilian population to pave the way for this operation. A number of houses and buildings have been razed to the ground to facilitate the movement of troops.

It may be recalled that, fearing Sinhalese state terrorism, a large number of people recently fled from Vadamarachchi to Wanni. Today, many more people are deserting their localities and moving to safer places following the commencement of the latest military operation.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan Defense Ministry has announced that Sri Lankan troops have imposed a curfew in Kilinochchi and Jaffna Districts. People are apprehensive that there could be very bad missile and bomb attacks in those localities.

Press censorship has also been imposed on reports by local journalists. It has been stated that local journalists and reporters are barred from reporting on battlefield events. It should be noted that the Chandrika Kumaratunga government imposed press censorship for three months during the forcible takeover of Velikamam. It has been reported that the Chandrika Kumaratunga government is very particular that no news should come out about the loss of troops or the loss of Tamil lives or property due to its frenzy of racial bigotry.

Chandrika Kumaratunga's troops — who killed hundreds of people, made 500,000 people refugees, and destroyed property worth millions of rupees in their previous "Operation Riviresa" — are bent upon subjecting Tamils to more and more misery and hardship through their latest military action. Observers express surprise over the launching of this military operation by the Sri Lankan Government at a time when it is facing major setbacks militarily and financially. They also state that although the current military operation was expected, it is doubtful whether the prevailing circumstances are conducive to a new military operation. The haste in commencing this operation is attributed to the political crisis in the south caused by dissatisfaction among the people and the sagging morale and lack of confidence of the troops and Sinhalese terrorists. The upcoming local body elections that the Chandrika government is facing are said to be another reason for this.

Thanks. The Tigers's aspiration is for the Tamil Eelam motherland!

**Sri Lanka: Military Views Recent LTTE Attack on Colombo Port**

*BK1904125296 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has reiterated its denial of the LTTE's [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] claim that it sank three naval vessels and three supply ships in last Friday's [12 April] attack on the Colombo Port. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a news release has dismissed the claim as being totally

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false. It said that this was another desperate attempt by the LTTE to hide the embarrassment of its abortive mission.

The ministry points out that a group of journalists, including foreign correspondents, have been taken into the port soon after the attack. Several major international news agencies, including AFP and ASSOCIATED PRESS, said that there was little evidence to support the Tiger's claim. The ministry attributed to the terrorist's false propaganda the desperation caused by the failure of the attack in the face of tight security at the port.

The military believes that the recent attack on the Colombo Port was aimed at blasting two recent acquired vessels by the Navy worth millions of U.S. dollars. The vessels, a landing craft and a subchaser, have been anchored at Rannungala base at the time of the attack. The landing craft has been described by the Navy as the biggest currently in use. The subchaser has been acquired to bolster the Navy's capability to combat the threat posed by terrorist's underwater warfare. Military officials said that the government's war efforts would have suffered a big setback if the Black Sea Tigers carried out the attack as planned. The subchaser is the only vessel of its kind available to the Navy. There was evidence to suggest that the two Black Sea Tiger frogmen were first detected by the Navy's sentry deployed closer to the pilot station.

**Sri Lanka: Further on Launching of New Offensive in North**

*BK2204021496 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 20 Apr 96*

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Government troops on Friday [19 April] launched an offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] in the north aimed at liberating areas not under the control of security forces.

A curfew was also imposed in these areas yesterday. An Operational headquarters spokesman said civilians had been advised to remain calm and to gather at safe places.

The Operation launched yesterday against the Tigers was code-named 'Riviresa 2'. The original Operation Riviresa ended with the taking of the tiger stronghold of Jaffna in December last year. It was launched on October 17, 1995. On December 2, the Riviresa troops captured Jaffna town.

During the first 'Riviresa' Operation nearly 2,500 Tigers were killed and over 5,000 injured. In this operation 500 soldiers died and 3,000 were injured.

A military spokesman yesterday said the government's aim was in the first instance to liberate the areas under LTTE control. The main solution to the ethnic problem is a political solution and not a military one. In fact this is what Deputy Defence Minister Gen. Anuruddha Ratwatte had emphasized time and again, he said.

The following is the text of the Operational headquarters communique:

An offensive operation code-named 'Riviresa 2' was launched at first light on 19 April 1996 in Jaffna to liberate areas not under the control of Security Forces.

Curfew has been declared with effect from 8 am on 19 April '96 in the districts of Jaffna and Kilinochchi until further notice. Maximum possible precautions have been taken to ensure safety of civilians and property. Civilians have been advised to remain calm and to gather at safe places designated by the Security Forces.

Further details will follow as the operation progresses.

**Sri Lanka: Heavy Fighting Rages in North; Toll Climbs Steadily**

*BK2004120596 Hong Kong AFP in English 1033 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, April 20 (AFP) - Heavy fighting raged in northern Sri Lanka Saturday [20 April] as infantry backed by tanks and air cover advanced deep into territory held by Tamil Tiger rebels amid mounting casualties, officials said.

Two soldiers were killed and about a dozen wounded within hours of the latest offensive, which began Friday, military officials said while the Defence Ministry claimed that at least 50 rebels were killed by security forces.

"As a result of the confrontation yesterday, over 50 terrorists were killed and a minimum of 80 wounded. Thirty two dead bodies of terrorists were recovered by troops," the Defence Ministry said.

It said infantry units moved eight kilometres (five miles) into territory held by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the Jaffna peninsula shortly after Friday's dawn offensive.

"A large number of civilians have stayed behind in their homes and were jubilant over the arrival of the army," the ministry said. "Civilians welcomed the arrival of the troops by ringing bells of kovils (Hindu temples)."

For its part, the LTTE said at least 10 civilians were killed when the army shelled the Thenamarachchi sector of the Jaffna peninsula and said the long-range attacks were the worst seen in the region.

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The widely expected army drive was launched under the cover of an indefinite curfew in Jaffna as well as in the adjoining district of Kilinochchi which is almost under LTTE domination, except for a few government military camps.

Defence officials said troops in the latest offensive, code-named "Sunshine Two", had opened two fronts in the Thenamarachchi sector of the peninsula located to the south and Vadamarachchi on the eastern side of Jaffna.

About one third of the 900-square-mile (2,340-square-kilometre) peninsula, the Waligamam sector to the west, was captured from the Tigers when troops conducted operation Sunshine between October and December last year.

The LTTE's Voice of Tigers radio said Saturday that the army thrust was from several camps located in the peninsula. "The military is trying to go forward from their camps towards different targets," the Tiger radio said.

The Tigers had warned civilians earlier that the military was bracing for a renewed offensive after the Sinhala and Tamil New Year last weekend and vowed to retaliate by escalating attacks in the capital Colombo.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga two weeks ago extended a state of emergency throughout the country saying that Tigers were planning violence during local government elections which have since been put off till later this year.

Using the same emergency regulations, the president Friday imposed an indefinite censorship on war reporting by the local media.

The government imposed identical censorship when troops carried out their previous offensive in Jaffna between October and December last year. That operation claimed the lives of 500 soldiers and an estimated 2,500 rebels.

However, only a few thousand civilians remained in areas captured by the security forces while tens of thousands of civilians fled into areas dominated by the guerrillas who are fighting for independence.

The LTTE pulled out of a 100-day truce with President Kumaratunga and marked the beginning of the latest cycle of violence by blasting two navy gunboats at the northeastern port of Trincomalee a year ago Friday.

The LTTE is leading a protracted struggle for a separate state called Eelam in the northern and eastern regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated. More than 50,000 people have died in the conflict since 1972.

**Sri Lanka: Bomber Runs Into Trouble During Anti-Tiger Mission**

*BK2004121496 Hong Kong AFP in English 1047 GMT 20 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, April 20 (AFP) - A ground attack aircraft ran into trouble during a bombing mission against Tamil rebels in northern Sri Lanka Saturday [20 April] but later landed safely after harmlessly jettisoning a bomb, officials said.

The aircraft was forced to dump a heavy bomb over a jungle area in north central Anuradhapura after the device failed to fire on approaching the target over the northern Jaffna peninsula, officials said.

"The pilot had to fly over an uninhabited jungle area to somehow drop the bomb," a local official in Anuradhapura, 206 kilometres (160 miles) north of here said. "Otherwise he would not have been able to land."

The aircraft was one of several deployed to hit targets of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) currently facing a major military onslaught in Jaffna.

Tiger guerrillas are known to have fired surface to air missiles and the airforce has lost seven aircraft in the past one year. Most planes crashed due to rebel action.

**Sri Lanka: 'Heavy Fighting' in North Amid Offensive Against LTTE**

*BK2104114696 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 21 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Heavy fighting raged in the Northern Province yesterday. Infantry backed by tank and air cover had advanced about 8 km into LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]-held territory. Troops of Operation Riviresa Two attacked three terrorist hideouts and inflicted heavy casualties on them. Over 50 terrorists were killed and at least 80 were wounded in clashes. The Ministry of Defense says every possible precaution has been taken to protect civilians. Many civilians welcomed the arrival of the Army and gathered at kovils [Hindu temples] and other places of religious worship to receive the advancing troops by ringing bells.

Meanwhile, naval craft on patrol destroyed three of the five LTTE boats they detected moving from Mandaitivu toward Devils Point on Thursday [18 April] morning. Five terrorists were killed in the naval attack.

Meanwhile, Deputy Defense Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte has toured the newly liberated areas of the Jaffna Peninsula. He visited civilians in safe areas designated by the security forces. The minister inquired into the well-being of the civilians and listened to their

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grievances. He instructed officials to take every possible measure to protect the civilian population and provide welfare facilities to them.

**Sri Lanka: Commander—'Very Important Place' Captured From LTTE**

*BK2204061896 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 22 Apr 96*

[Report by W.G. Gooneratne and Chandradasa Malawarachchi in Anuradhapura — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riviresa 2 troops have advanced several more kilometres into Tiger territory and killed over 30 Tigers during the first two days of the operation, Acting Army Commander Major General Rohan Daluwatte said in Anuradhapura on Sunday [21 April].

Speaking at a public meeting held to commemorate fallen war heroes, Major General Daluwatte said the army has also captured "a very important place" from the Tigers. He did not elaborate. Only two soldiers have been killed during the first 48 hours, he added.

"We will capture the other areas held by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. The morale of our boys is very high. We will create a situation in the North-East where peace would prevail".

He thanked President Chandrika Kumaratunga and Deputy Defence Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte for "extending every assistance to the security forces".

He extended an "open invitation" to youth to join the army and serve the motherland.

The acting army chief, who led the Riviresa I operation which culminated in the re-taking of Jaffna last year, said the civilians living in the newly-liberated area were being looked after by the security forces. "New army recruits can look after these civilians living in the regained areas".

**Sri Lanka: Tiger Guerrillas Admit Fall of Key Town Amid Fresh Violence**

*BK2204052796 Hong Kong AFP in English 0452 GMT 22 Apr 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, April 22 (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas Monday [22 April] admitted losing a key town in northern Sri Lanka to advancing government forces but staged hit-and-run attacks elsewhere, killing at least eight security personnel.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said over its radio that the army took the town of Kodikamam in the Thenamacrchchi sector of the Jaffna peninsula, covering 20 kilometres (eight miles) from their original positions.

In the military offensive mounted under the cover of an indefinite curfew since Friday, at least 30 civilians were killed and 50 wounded, the LTTE's Voice of Tigers radio said.

"The army is strengthening their positions at Kodikamam and Kachchai areas, " the rebel radio said. "Security forces are using tanks, armoured cars and taking people captive."

As fighting raged in the north of the country, the LTTE stepped up attacks elsewhere in the island and overran an army detachment in the north-eastern village of Morawewa, killing four soldiers on Monday, officials said.

They said another three police commandos from the elite Special Task Forces were gunned down by the Tigers at Mandur in the eastern province on Sunday. A paramilitary home guard was also killed.

The authorities had warned that the Tigers may escalate attacks in the rest of the country to avenge the fall of territory held by them in the Jaffna peninsula.

In the latest offensive code named Riviresa Two, or Sunshine Two, the Defence Ministry has claimed strategic gains but refrained from naming the places wrested from rebel control.

The ministry has said that two government soldiers and at least 80 rebels were killed in the fighting. Rebel resistance had been minimal, the ministry added.

The army launched a similar offensive between October and December last year to capture the Waligamam sector located on the west of the Jaffna peninsula and dismantled several civil administration structures of the rebels.

The LTTE is leading a protracted campaign for an independent homeland called Eelam in the island's northern and eastern regions since 1972. More than 50,000 people have died in the bitter homeland struggle.

**Sri Lanka: Tamil Rebel Boats Fleeing To Mainland Destroyed**

*BK2204061696 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 22 Apr 96*

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Security forces have thwarted attempts by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] to flee to the mainland in the face of advancing

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troops, completely destroying 15 Tiger boats in the Kilali lagoon.

The operational headquarters of the Ministry of Defence said air force aircraft and naval gun boats assisting ground troops participating in Operation Riviresa 2 engaged LTTE boats attempting to escape towards the mainland. Tiger casulaties were not immediately available, but are believed to be high.

It said LTTE transmissions indicated that the Sea Tiger boss Soosai has appealed for help, admitting that he is not in a position to do anything without boats. In reply Thamil Chelvam and Pottu Amman have ordered Soosai to do everything possible to halt the army advance.

Operation Riviresa 2, launched at first light on Friday [19 April], has so far liberated over 30,000 civilians from the grip of Tigers, the operational headquarters said.

Reports reaching Colombo from the North said civilians have defied an order by the LTTE to vacate the peninsula in spite of an offer to transport them free of charge across the Kilali lagoon. Tiger resistance to the army advance has been minimal as they started fleeing the area leaving the civilians behind.

The operational headquarters said: "Troops have reported that large number of civilians were coming to army controlled areas. They are being issued with dry rations by the troops. Police are screening thousands of civilians who are anxious to return to the Valikamam division.

"Troops recovered 14 bodies of Tigers. Over 30 Tiger cadres have been killed so far. Five soldiers were wounded during the advance on Saturday.

"Security forces captured a van transporting Tigers and all of them were killed on the spot. The Air Force engaged known LTTE targets. Tiger casualties due to air and naval strikes is not yet known.

"Two LTTE cadres who attempted to mingle with civilians were pointed out by residents. They were arrested by the troops. They have told the troops that many other cadres were willing to surrender to the security forces at the earliest possible opportunity. [quotation marks as received]

The operation continues.

Operation Riviresa 1 culminated with the re-taking of the former Tiger bastion of Jaffna in December last year.

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